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DECEMBER 1956

COMMENTARY

The Powers and the Middle East
Washington's "New Pacifism" — HAL LEHRMAN
Why England and France Intervened — GEORGE LICHTHEIM
Russia Enters the Levant — RAY ALAN
Eruption in East Europe — HUGH SETON-WATSON
The Paradox of Jawaharlal Nehru — G. F. HUDSON
Hate-Monger with Literary Trimmings — JAMES RORTY
Erich Fromm's Midrash on Love — JAKOB J. PETUCHOWSKI
Three Poems
A Chair in Heaven—A Story — ANZIA YEZIERSKA
From the American Scene
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Cedars of Lebanon
Joy in the Holy Days — HERMANN COHEN
On the Horizon
Annals of the Prize Ring — STEVEN MARCUS
The Study of Man
Science, Ideology, and Dialogue — NORMAN BIRNBAUM

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Irving Kristol — Dan Jacobson — David Donald
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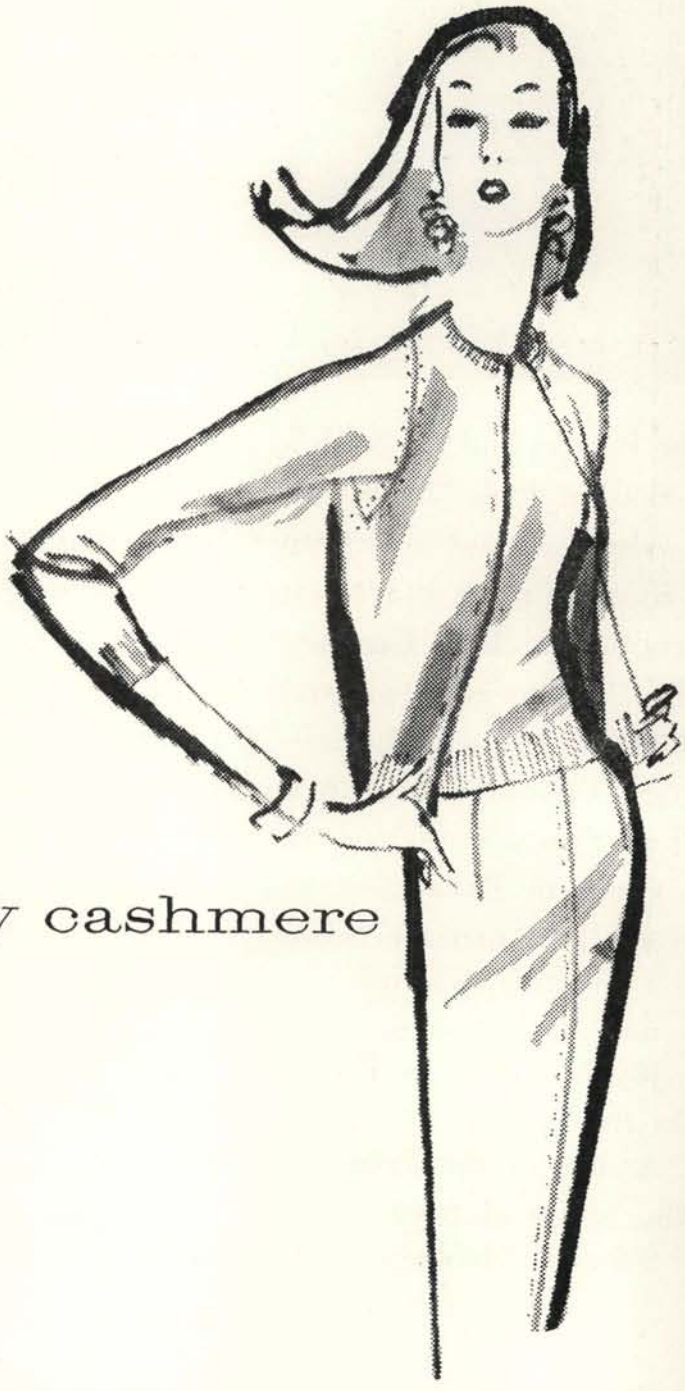

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

The 50th Birthday of the AJC — *Oscar Handlin*

This year the American Jewish Committee celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of its founding in 1906, to meet the crisis of philanthropy with which the Kishinev pogroms then confronted American Jewry. Since then the Committee has had to cope with other crises, some of them greater than that of Kishinev, and not all of them abroad. Professor Oscar Handlin of Harvard, noted historian in the American field, reviews the achievements of the Committee since its inception, and tells how it had to shape and re-shape its aims and expand its broadening defense activities to meet the needs of Jews caught up in a half-century of war and revolution, demagogy and persecution, prosperity and depression, both here and abroad.

Will the Western Alliance Survive? — *O. Henry Brandon*

The Washington correspondent of London's *Sunday Times* surveys the effects of the Mideast and East European crises on the Western Alliance, and indicates some of the policy revisions that may be necessary if it is to survive.

The Radical Novel in America — *Richard Chase*

Some seventy works of fiction produced in the 20's and 30's have been designated radical or proletarian novels by a recent study of the genre—Walter B. Rideout's *The Radical Novel in America*. Richard Chase takes a long backward glance at several of these books, which he finds rather more interesting on re-examination than one had thought.

Ancient Jewish Symbols — *Erwin R. Goodenough*

A distinguished scholar assesses the significance, for the history of Judaism (and Christianity), of the pictorial decoration found in Jewish graves and synagogues of the Greco-Roman period. In our "Study of Man" department.

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COMMENTARY

WASHINGTON'S "NEW PACIFISM"

Morality and the Free World's Interests

HAL LEHRMAN

THE administration's search for a policy in the Middle East, this writer was told the other day in Washington by one who helps look for it, reminded him of the ant who got tired of taking so long to travel from one place to another, and was told by an older ant to turn himself into a grasshopper if he wanted to go faster. Excellent! said the younger ant, and how do I do that? Don't ask me, said the other ant—I just give the policy guidance!

The outlines of American objectives in the current East Mediterranean crisis seemed clear and definite when stated in resolute tones by authoritative Washington sources to this correspondent late in November. These goals were seen as threefold:

1) To limit or contain Soviet penetration of the Arab world.

2) To use the occasion offered by the break-up of the old Mideast patterns through the Anglo-Franco-Israeli military action to achieve favorable and lasting settlement of the Palestine and Suez disputes.

3) To revive and repair the groggy Western alliance.

But the ways and means of attaining these ends were somewhat less precise. Indeed, it was the judgment of most onlookers that the means being used by the United States were likely to frustrate rather than promote the administration's ends, and turn tactical defeat into strategic disaster.

At a moment when swift developments are daily changing predictions into fact, it is awkward to be locked up in type for the time-lag imposed by a monthly magazine. Yet there may be merit in attempting here to analyze certain basic conflicts in Western attitudes as they emerged from talks with numerous highly placed—but necessarily anonymous—Washington observers. From these exchanges, too, came a number of significant bits of background revelation which "now can be told."

IT WAS disclosed, first, that the United States had favored the re-arming of Israel against the threat of Egypt's Soviet weapons

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WITH George Lichtheim elsewhere in this issue discussing the Mideast crisis as seen from London, and Ray Alan dealing with it from the vantage point of Cyprus, HAL LEHRMAN here rounds out COMMENTARY's coverage of the issues involved with a first-hand report of views, opinions, and policies in high places in Washington. Mr. Lehrman, author and lecturer, hardly needs introduction, having won a name for himself in recent years in COMMENTARY's pages and elsewhere as the outstanding reporter in the English language on Israeli affairs. Readers will recollect his series of articles on Israel and the Arab world following his 1955 swing around that part of the globe; they may also recall his foreshadowing, in those articles, of current developments.

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far more energetically than was generally supposed. Unfortunately, as so often in matters where John Foster Dulles's *grasp* of basic issues has been acute, his policy *procedures* had been inept—at least this is what was said by those who know intimately how the Secretary has operated.

By their account, Mr. Dulles suddenly perceived last April that the Israelis had been right in clamoring for modern jet planes and other heavy weapons from the West to counter the Soviet arms acquired by Nasser in his deal with the "Czechs" the previous September. Accordingly, the Department of State had begun sending out word that Israel's vulnerability offered a terrible temptation to the Arabs. The Department, while still declining to sell American arms to Israel in order to avoid irritating the Arabs, publicly stated that it had no objections to such sales by other powers. But the amount of zeal which Mr. Dulles put into urging such sales upon other countries has escaped attention. In April he notified our ambassadors in countries with arms to sell that we favored sales to Israel. In early May he announced openly that the discrepancy between Israeli and Egyptian armaments should be reduced. By mid-May and June he was working hard on the French and the Canadians to sell. The French had been responding, but Canadian reluctance was such that the Secretary had, reportedly, to make frequent appeals to Ottawa over the telephone, and complained about the lack of "a sense of responsibility" up there.

The Canadians, in fact, thought it intolerable that the U.S. should try to escape Arab resentment by coaxing others to sell planes to Israel. Insisting on shared responsibility, Canada held out for *some* sort of visible American participation, if only to the extent of such relatively inoffensive items as helicopters and half-tracks.

Late in July Mr. Dulles finally agreed to this, and announcement was imminent—when Nasser seized the Suez Canal.* Washington wanted to proceed with the sales of arms to Israel—but without publicity. Canada demurred. The wrangle was not compromised until September. Ottawa then announced its decision to release a quantity of Sabre jets, and growled that other countries were also selling things. Two days later Washington let it be known that there was no embargo on arms to Israel and that routine U.S. shipments had already in fact been made—not very big, but bigger than under the previous administration. (This was true: under Harry Truman, Israel's army had acquired much equipment from the U.S., but virtually nothing that could shoot.)

NASSER'S Suez grab had already gone a long way toward removing most of the political resistance in Western Europe and elsewhere to Israeli arms purchases, especially in France. Thereafter Israel's problem was no longer principally where to find arms, but how to pay for them. Israel had been able to acquire arms from various sources from March on, but until Nasser's Canal seizure the only jets matching the Egyptian ones that she could get came from France, and only in a thin trickle subtracted from U.S. offshore NATO procurement orders. The secret of stepped-up deliveries after July 26, the day of the Suez grab, was well kept, but it is now possible to reveal that before the Sinai campaign Israel had received from France not twenty-four Mystères, as was widely reported, but at least sixty. With these came much larger deliveries than had been divulged of fast little AMX-13 tanks and other combat equipment.

Sinai itself eliminated whatever imbalance of military power still remained. As in 1948, Egypt again proved herself to be an excellent source of military supplies for Israel. Barring new shipments of Soviet weapons to Egypt, Israel was at last able to feel secure in the air and on the ground. If anything, official Israeli evaluation of the booty taken in Sinai ($50 million) seemed understated. The bottled-up Egyptian army lost an estimated $100 million worth of arms, of which scarcely $20 million worth was de-

*See "What Price Israel's Defense?" by this author in COMMENTARY, September 1956.

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stroyed, the remainder being captured in usable condition. Such air superiority as Egypt still had was wiped out by Anglo-French bombing. The Israelis themselves blunted Egypt's edge in effective manpower by putting out of action better than two divisions—the "flower" of Nasser's army. The published total of Egyptian prisoners did not fully reflect the mammoth rout. The Israelis often reportedly preferred to economize on rations by encouraging surrendered troops to turn around and head for home. In some cases, the victors even supplied transportation part of the way.

WAS there collusion between the Israeli and the Anglo-French military effort? On the Israeli and French sides, the most that would be conceded was that an understanding had been reached about the Israeli half of the adventure. It was known that Paris had long been communicating to Jerusalem its intense sympathy with Israel in her effort to cope with Arab provocations, and its equally intense rancor against Nasser for his Algerian, Suez, and other mischief. There had been professedly no Israeli contact with the British in preparation for Sinai, though Jerusalem had been advised at least informally that Britain regarded Nasser as an enemy with whom it was very hard to live in peace. If any agreements existed with the British, they were only indirect—through the French—it was said.

The Israelis seemed to have been sure of a French veto in the Security Council of any condemnation of Israel as an aggressor, and of French opposition to any attempted enforcement of the old three-power guarantees for Mideast borders. There was reported evidence of French air protection available around Tel Aviv against Egyptian bombings —which did not occur. In general, too, Israel knew she could count on Anglo-French political aid against the anticipated cry of protest. She was aware that "things were going on in Cyprus, but so was everybody else." Concerning the Anglo-French "ultimatum" to Israel and Egypt the day after the Sinai invasion was launched, one knowledgeable Israeli source put it this way: "To call it collusion would be far too much, coincidence too little."

As for the British, they continued to repeat that their ultimatum and subsequent military action were exclusively designed to protect the Canal and keep belligerent Arabs and Israelis apart. To bystanders who commented that the mass bombing of Egyptian airfields alone seemed a singular way of being impartial, the British explained that had the Egyptian air force not been put out of commission it might have gone berserk, raiding far and wide and extending the local conflict into a world war.

On the subject of collusion, high American sources declared themselves to be in possession of sufficient (undisclosed) evidence actually to establish a timetable for the "conspiracy." According to this timetable, France had begun shipping arms in quantity to Israel in August. (This had been confirmed by other sources, as noted above.) On October 13—the day the Security Council voted the principles according to which a Suez settlement was to be negotiated—France and Israel allegedly agreed on synchronized military operations. Three days later, when Eden and Lloyd visited Paris, Britain decided to go along with France. It was from that day, October 16, that the Americans later dated "the blackout of frank Anglo-French consultations with us." French Premier Mollet had told his cabinet that week that the Suez question was far from settled, that action was imminent, and that there was a diplomatic secret to be kept even from the French cabinet itself.

D-day for Sinai was set with a view to the disorders in Hungary. Israel, reportedly, would have preferred to wait another month until the onset of the winter rains, which would have impeded Egyptian regrouping against an Israeli offensive. But France was described as insistent on taking advantage of Soviet distractions in satellite Eastern Europe.

Washington knew nothing of this when Israel began mobilizing towards the last week of October. Suspicion of collusion was

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first aroused by an American military attaché's impression in Tel Aviv that his British and French colleagues knew more about the mobilization than he did. Normally, all three observers shared their data freely; this time the others "clammed up" on the American.

By October 24, Washington knew something was in the wind. By Saturday, October 27, U.S. Ambassador Lawson was cabling alarm. This led to Eisenhower's appeals to Ben Gurion to keep the peace. Sunday brought discovery of the French arms shipments. "The French," a Washington informant told me dryly last month, "were going through the act of asking our authorization for offshore deliveries to the Israelis —but they were shipping without telling us. Some of the planes arrived still showing NATO markings, which were effaced at the Israeli airfields." Monday, the Israeli columns entered Sinai.

Their attack made good military sense, Washington observers said, as being intended to wipe out the *fedayeen* bases designated in the first Israeli communiqué as the objective. But the same communiqué also spoke of engaging the Egyptians *in the direction of the Suez Canal*—an apparent slip indicating collusion with the British and French. Israel, according to the American interpretation, was supposed to have five days in which to reach Suez—and thus provide London and Paris with the pretext for rushing to the Canal's rescue. But Eden waited only one day before issuing an ultimatum—when the main Israeli forces were still sixty miles from the Canal—calling on both sides to withdraw ten miles from the waterway. This made no sense, and could be explained only by the rapid rush of concurrent diplomatic developments, American sources contended. The British and French ambassadors had been summoned to the State Department and urged to procure their governments' consent to tripartite anti-Israeli action in the Security Council. When they failed to produce approval by London and Paris within the next morning's deadline, the United States acted alone and offered a strong anti-Israeli resolution at the UN that very afternoon. This swift American action forced the Anglo-French hand, so Washington says, and brought the premature ultimatum—all of which exposed the collusion.

WHITE HOUSE wrath spilled over against Israel because Ben Gurion had "oversold" Eisenhower on his renunciation of preventive war, and against Britain and France because they had failed to consult their major ally before committing an act of force which seemed to jeopardize the United States as much as themselves. But, in the Anglo-French view, neither had ever hidden the conviction from the President or Dulles that appeasement of Nasser would be as futile as appeasement of Hitler, and that they would ultimately have to fight the Egyptian dictator if the price of passivity was to be another Munich. Further, consultation with Washington before moving against Cairo would only have brought another veto from Dulles.

The Israelis, for their part, contended that three major developments had nullified Israel's previous declarations against a preventive war: (1) Nasser's victory in nationalizing the Suez Canal; (2) Jordan's incorporation into the Egyptian-led encirclement of Israel; (3) evidence of a massive new *fedayeen* offensive in preparation.

Israel had hoped that Nasser's seizure of Suez would induce the West to force a showdown with him. Instead, she saw the West, pushed by American diplomacy, in retreat before him. American intentions had been good: to break Nasser's resistance by economic and diplomatic pressures instead of by force. But the results had been disastrous because Nasser was clearly surviving the pressure and growing mightier in prestige with every passing day. The maritime community was becoming increasingly obsequious, its "Users' Association" degenerating into a mere apparatus for collecting Canal dues for Nasser. Having defied the entire world with impunity, he could now foresee the easy destruction of little Israel.

The first omen had been the election, in

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early October, of a Jordanian parliament unequivocally dedicated to Israel's destruction. This, according to the Israelis, removed the last restraining influence of Egypt's rival, Iraq, upon Jordan, and put the latter solidly within Nasser's sphere of influence. Nasser promptly moved to form an Egyptian-Syrian-Jordanian military alliance, which was signed in Amman several days later. This done, the three chiefs of staff in the Jordanian capital proceeded to plan a three-way *fedayeen* assault on Israel.

Even before this, Nasser had succeeded in establishing an underground *fedayeen* network in all the states bordering on Israel, including Lebanon. Egyptian officers, accredited as military attachés, held command posts in all the raider bands. The *fedayeen* could operate independently of national policy in any Arab state. (As many as one thousand separate *fedayeen* assault groups were available, according to documentary evidence which the Israelis claim to have seized in Gaza.) Some of the incursions from Jordan earlier this year were known by Israeli intelligence to have been Egyptian-led, but no retaliatory action was taken against Egypt for fear of irritating world opinion at that time.

Nasser had suspended all *fedayeen* operations from his side of the Israeli border when he grabbed the Suez Canal; attacks had come only from the side of Israel's other neighbors. Now, confident of Suez victory, Nasser was again turning to direct assault. Inclusion of Jordan in his system of alliances, according to the Israelis, cleared the way. Intelligence reports were said to have disclosed a step-up in *fedayeen* training and intense activity in Sinai (later confirmed by Israeli capture of heavy offensive equipment, including tank-repair depots and vast fuel dumps, close to the Israeli line).

According to the Israelis, subsequent events fully justified their warning formally given the State Department, on Saturday, October 27, that a new Egyptian *fedayeen* campaign was imminent. On Sunday, three *fedayeen* attacks were launched from Egyptian territory—the first such attacks in three months. On Monday, the Israeli offensive started. On its second and third day there were spasmodic *fedayeen* attempts at retaliation; these were not reported to the Israeli public to avoid public disquiet. As the Israeli columns swung back toward Gaza, the *fedayeen* bands fled from that area across the Negev—good "bandit country"—toward Jordan. An estimated five hundred raiders made their escape in this way, doing what damage they could en route.

But the *fedayeen* threat, the Israelis maintain, is now removed only on the Egyptian side. On all other frontiers the *fedayeen* squads remain intact, capable of acting without the knowledge of the local Arab governments, and even in defiance of them—ready to embroil their relations with Israel at a signal from Cairo.

THE sluggish performance of the Anglo-French in Suez, contrasting with the dashing Israeli campaign, was seen by many as proof positive that no prior consultations with the Israelis, on a military level at least, could have taken place. I found no Washington military expert who was not baffled by the "bad show" put on by the British and French. They moved as cautiously as if they had had Rommel's Afrika Korps in front of them, not Nasser's Egyptians.

If the waste of precious days before the landing at Port Said was due to home political considerations, to a desire to keep casualties low, it was a monumental miscalculation of where the real political risk lay. The British and French badly overestimated the power of their veto in the Security Council, and grossly underestimated the deterrent power of international pressure. They thought the veto gave them two weeks or more in which to do the military job unimpeded; they never dreamed, apparently, that the United States would react so vigorously, or that the General Assembly would move at all—and they entirely overlooked the possibility of intervention from Moscow despite Budapest and Warsaw.

The result was that their assault was brought to an ignominious halt, when a few

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more days might have accomplished its prime objectives: liberation of the Canal and the downfall of Nasser. In retrospect, it became evident that both goals might have been achieved if the French and British had stayed out and simply given Israel assurances that she could take action against Nasser without being impeded by the old international guarantees of Egypt's frontiers.*

How decisive were Bulganin's notes threatening the British and French with Russian rocket weapons? Washington took the notes seriously enough to keep the lights blazing in all-night conferences. Disposed to condemn the Anglo-French adventure as a provocation against the U.S., the Eisenhower administration was quite prepared to believe that Moscow would be at least equally furious at the prospect of losing all the advantages it had gained in the Middle East since the arms deal with Nasser. The Russians, it was feared, had good reasons to throw their weight around; it enabled them to distract attention from the butchery in Hungary, capitalize on the Anglo-French decline in international esteem, and pose as champions of the UN—all in one.

The British and French were now declaring that their cease-fire's following hard on the Soviet warning was accidental rather than consequential. British quarters recalled that Eden from the start had described the invasion as "temporary" and had left room for the UN to take over. Further, London had embraced the principle of a UN police force from the moment Canada's Lester Pearson first proposed it. The French were saying that the British were less able than they to resist the psychological pressure from Moscow, and compared the division in the House of Commons with the solidarity of the French parliament. But how, asked the French, could we go on without the British?

Nevertheless, it was clear the Russian move had counted heavily in the Anglo-French retreat. It had been accompanied by terrifying reports of Soviet airlifts over Turkey and arms deliveries to Syria. Word had gone around of Soviet assurances to the Arabs that, if they would hold out just one week, help would come. And probably the greatest persuader of all, in the opinion of uninvolved West European onlookers, was the spectacle of the U.S. and the USSR lined up against America's partners in the Western alliance and against Israel—"the crowning achievement," one aghast ambassador called it, "of the New Co-Existence."

Among the Israelis, there was no inclination to deny that the Soviet blast "made us shake in our shoes." But they had not accepted the cease-fire and agreed to quit Sinai because of *that*. They were not surprised by the animosity toward the Jewish state shown by a "Ukrainian pogromist" like Nikita Khrushchev. ("We have checked the report and found it true: Khrushchev *did* say in Warsaw, during the first trouble over Gomulka, that 'American imperialists and Zionists' were to blame.") Having destroyed the chief immediate threat, the vanguard of the Egyptian army, the Israelis may have considered that holding the Sinai Desert was not worth the risk of Russian attack. But the overriding consideration in their agreement to withdrawal was that, on top of all this pressure, they could feel the weight of American anger.

Eisenhower, it was known, had sent strong messages, written and oral, to Ben Gurion after the Bulganin threats. Ambassador Lawson had talked very bluntly. Israel's existence was important to the U.S., the messages intimated, but the UN's existence was more important. Unless Israel yielded, the U.S. would feel compelled to vote for all UN sanctions against her, no matter how severe, perhaps even expulsion from the world community. ("About the only thing not mentioned was the arrest of Abba Eban.")

Not even the threat of such punishment was decisive, however. What brought capitulation was simply the unthinkable possibility that Israel might be cut off from her stoutest resource and best friend, the

*See "Western Self-Interest and Israeli Self-Defense" by this writer in the May 1956 number.

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American people. During the awful hours of the Soviet-induced panic, Ben Gurion reportedly spoke by telephone with the Israeli embassy in Washington no less than eleven times. Not UN sanctions, not Soviet terror, but the dread of irremediable estrangement from the U.S., was said finally to have brought him to surrender.

HAVING yielded on a cease-fire and eventual withdrawal from Sinai, would Israel also give up Gaza and the Aqaba Gulf islands? Massive pressure or unanticipated events may conceivably force her out. But, as of late November, all signs pointed to an adamant stand against withdrawal from these points as long as possible.

To the Israelis, any UN attempt to put the Egyptians back in Gaza and the islands would seem treachery compounded by folly. Both areas had been festering boils on the body of Arab-Israeli relations. Gaza had been a nest of raiders, the islands a knife at the throat of Israel's shipping. Israeli sentiment seemed especially firm on Gaza. "I do not think," one Israeli spokesman told me, "that the Egyptians will ever return to Gaza without another war. That's how they came there in the first place." World opinion, as reflected in the very resolutions of the General Assembly which were regulating the present efforts for peace, had rejected any re-establishment of the previous impossible situation.

It was too early for administration views in Washington to have hardened on Gaza ("We're playing everything by ear"), but an unofficial disposition was visible not to quarrel about Israel's retaining Gaza in any final settlement, provided the Arabs there were redistributed through the country. Asked how Israel could do so without gravely endangering her security, the reply was: the Gaza Strip has nearly 300,000 Arabs on a "sand dune" twenty-five miles long and five miles wide which has virtually nothing local to eat except fish; over 200,000 of them have been supported by a UN relief agency, which can't be expected to do so forever; another 60,000 have been maintained by Egypt; the only sensible way for Israel to meet the burden would be by transferring the Arabs to the interior, where they might begin earning a living.

A possible solution of the Aqaba problem, it was intimated in American quarters, would be the permanent demilitarization of the islands, with UN inspection and guarantee. The port of Elath itself was seen as of only minor importance to Israel, in any case. It was too small to handle big ships, and its climate was so dreadful that people had to be lured by income-tax exemptions to live there. Once Suez was opened to Israeli shipping, Elath would die on the vine.

OBVIOUSLY, however, such an opening of the Canal presupposed a determined U.S. policy of settling this and other difficult Mideastern issues. Did such a policy exist, and how was it to function? To this, the authoritative American answer at the time of writing—privately expressed—seemed to be as follows.

The U.S. emphatically wants final settlements to emerge from the present turmoil. We do not want to let the situation slip back to where it was. All our spokesmen, from the President and Mr. Dulles down, have reiterated this firmly. In fact, we have offered resolutions to the General Assembly for the creation of committees specifically empowered to deal with the Palestine and Suez issues. These committees would be only a beginning; we expect to urge other measures as events develop. Nor do we hold any brief for Nasser or nurse any enthusiasm for him. We consider him a dangerous source of unrest for the whole Middle East.

But force is not the way to bring Nasser to book, the American exposition continued. We had been making progress in the Arab world *against* Nasser. The oil-producing countries were getting tired of his frenzied policies, to which he was committing them without consultation and against their interests. King Saud was worrying about Egypt's propaganda interference inside his feudal realm. Christian Lebanon was troubled by the dangers of Islamic passions being fanned by Nasser's super-na-

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tionalism. Hashemite Iraq and Jordan were uneasy at Nasser's imperialist ambitions and his flirtation with Russia. Even inside Egypt, the Western-educated elements were beginning to be pretty sick of their dictator, his personality, and his pro-Kremlin orientation. Meanwhile, economic pressure against him was increasing. Capital investment in Egypt had slumped. Business there was at a standstill. The Soviets were dumping Egyptian cotton. All this seemed likely to force the Colonel to come to reason.

But then came the military attack on Egypt—so ran the argument—which spoiled everything by leaving anti-Nasser Egyptians and all the Arab governments no choice but to side with him against the "imperialists" and "colonialists."

How can we repair the damage? World opinion sees now that it was wrong to let the Palestine and Suez crises drift. There is a new determination in the General Assembly this time to wring out settlements and stamp them with permanent guarantees. But there is an equal determination not to condone aggression. Therefore, the first thing to do is to eliminate the effects of aggression. How else do we convince the Arabs and Asia that peaceful settlements should follow? The Emergency Force, moreover, is not an instrument of the U.S. and her allies. It must have sovereign Egypt's consent to the terms for its entry. It is up to the UN and its Secretary General—not up to us—to find such terms.

Once the *status quo ante* has been restored, then it will be time enough to concentrate on long-range settlements. We envisage that plans for such settlements will be proposed and debated within the UN. The results of these deliberations would then be conveyed to the disputants, with a directive that they negotiate and bargain on details within the framework of the general decision —and reach an agreement. We stand by to help the peace succeed through major programs of economic aid—among them loans to Israel for compensation to resettled Palestine refugees; the Jordan Valley water plan for Syria, Jordan, and Israel; and even possibly the controversial Aswan Dam for Egypt, which we once rejected.

Would Nasser be difficult? We do not expect so. He has squandered his material resources and his reputation in fruitless military posturing. The Canal is blocked, and useless to him. Economically, he is almost bankrupt. He knows how near he was to destruction, and how close to falling under Soviet control. He'll be more reasonable from now on. If not—if he stands out against a settlement when all other litigants and the international community desire one—then he will only isolate and discredit himself. Everybody knows he was saved by the U.S. and the UN. If he gets "tough" again, he'll only hang himself.

Israel needs peace, not territory. The maritime world wants a free Suez waterway, not conquests. Until now, every side has approached a settlement intemperately. This method has failed. The only alternative is settlements imposed by the conscience of the international community. In full awareness of the implications, our government has taken a position based on moral principle. We must not jeopardize that position. The UN itself is at stake.

THUS, informally, went the new American idealism. Paradoxically, the realists most likely to assail this idealistic view lacked the realistic strength to back up their convictions. The U.S., the idealist, held all the power. Israel clearly could do little except try to persuade. The prestige of Britain and France had shrunk vastly after their Suez failure. In the light of their apparently frightened retreat before the Soviets, the dominant new fact was that the two European NATO powers could no longer pursue a policy in the Middle East independent of their American partner. Henceforth the latter's support was essential in confronting the Russians there. Indeed, the most pressing Anglo-French task now appeared to be the reconstruction of the Western alliance—which, French Foreign Minister Pineau was pathetically conceding, "is our only safeguard against sharing the fate of Hungary."

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But this did not mean that the British and French had abandoned hope of persuading the U.S. to adopt an *effective* three-power policy in the Middle East, especially since they regarded the true American interest as identical with their own and that of the rest of the free world; they—and others as well, including important American observers—found much to alarm them in the administration's view as outlined above.

According to these critics, the U.S. was wrong in her estimate of the chief elements in the present crisis: the UN, the Arabs, Nasser, the Russians—and even the capacity of the U.S. herself to achieve a solution.

The UN, first of all, was not the above-the-battle moral arbiter which the U.S. supposed it to be. Its members voted in terms of their individual interests, not out of corporate altruism. The Soviet veto, it was pointed out, would frustrate the rule of reason in the Security Council. And the combination of Soviet satellites with the Arab and the Asian blocs would prevent the two-thirds majority needed in the General Assembly.

How long, moreover, was American policy-making entitled to go on erring monumentally in its Arab appraisals? Ambassador Henry Byroade had persuaded the State Department that the Czech arms deal with Egypt was a one-time transaction which would not bring Soviet agents in. The absurdity of this assurance had been revealed by the discovery of Soviet arms in Egypt in a quantity and of a quality far beyond all reports—and beyond the capacity of the Egyptians to use. Up to the last moment, the State Department had believed that Nasser was a capable military leader who stood at the head of a formidable coalition of Arab states. But now, under Israeli attack, Nasser's elite divisions had crumbled, many of his officers had fled, his troops had shown little stomach for fighting—and not a single "loyal" ally had come to his aid. Where then was the vaunted Arab solidarity? Even the rabidly pro-Nasser premier of Jordan, Suleiman Nabulsi, recently elected on a do-or-die program to throw out the British and annihilate Israel, had balked. When Nasser appealed for help, Nabulsi had gone for advice to—of all people!—the British ambassador to Jordan. The latter had advised him to ask Nasser what help Egypt could provide the Jordanians were the Israelis to attack them, too. Nasser, according to reliable accounts, was by then too busy to reply.

No, said the critics, the fact was that Nasser's regime would have caved in if hostilities against him had continued another forty-eight hours. And few would have rejoiced more than his Arab colleagues. With the exception of the Syrians, who were now being led by a clique of young officers devoted to Nasser and Moscow, all the Arab states were fed up with the Egyptian dictator, for the reasons already noted—and because the hot breath of the Kremlin was blowing down their necks.

But what were the Arabs, and the other peoples in Nasser's orbit, to think now? First they saw the British, French, and Israelis cease fire. Then they saw Nasser actually beginning to dictate the terms of their withdrawal. Worst of all, they saw Moscow and Washington anxiously engaged in re-establishing him on his clay feet again! For a country like Ethiopia, which, like other small states in the area, had reason to resent Nasser's imperialist meddling, the spectacle was troubling. In the days when Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold was pleading with Nasser to be reasonable about the Emergency Force, the Ethiopian delegate was overheard to ask perplexedly: "Was he beaten or wasn't he?"

Nasser himself lost no time in cooperating in his own rehabilitation. Already he and his "heroic" chief of staff, General Abdul Hakim Amer, were delivering ringing speeches on the theme of the Egyptians having driven the Israelis before them until the British and French, sneaking upon them from behind, had stabbed Egypt in the back; the Egyptian air force had *not* been destroyed—the enemy had bombed wooden dummies craftily distributed on the airstrips, and so forth. (Israeli Major General Moshe Dayan

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has conceded that, without the Anglo-French intervention, the Israeli clean-up of Sinai and Gaza would have taken, not four days, but five to seven.) A far less humiliating defeat at Israeli hands had cost King Farouk his throne. But the Egyptian people, shielded from the truth about this second disaster, would soon begin believing the Nasser version—and he would emerge bigger than ever and harder to dislodge. The Arab states would have to accept it too—didn't Nasser have the support of the Russians and the Americans?—and fear him all the more for having failed him while the actual shooting was going on.

Was it true, moreover—the critics asked—that the U.S. had to cling so steadfastly to a policy of moral exhortation and high-mindedness? She was not above using realistic pressure against her own friends. Consider, for instance, the calculating way she was withholding oil from fuel-hungry Western Europe in order to compel Anglo-French tractability on troop withdrawal. Why could she not use some of this tough-minded firmness against the other side? The U.S. now enjoyed great prestige with the Arabs because of her stand against the Anglo-French and Israeli invasions. Even Nasser, to curry favor with his own subjects, found it necessary to boast of his American support. Why should not this influence be used, for once, to press for a measure of Egyptian tractability?

The immediate issues, at the moment of writing, were the Emergency Force, withdrawal of the belligerent armies, and the clearing of the Canal. "Marshal Dag"—it was argued—enjoyed considerable leeway in interpreting his General Assembly mandate. But Hammarskjold was, after all, subject to advice and influence from UN members. The U.S. was not the least considerable among those. Why should she not take a firm position and urge positive views upon him? What purpose did it serve to help Nasser regain all his old vantage-points? Did anything in his record suggest he would be grateful and conciliatory thereafter?

Replacement of Anglo-French troops by a toothless international force before the Canal had been cleared, it was stressed, would enable Nasser to delay repairs until he got his own terms. On the other hand, an Emergency Force with *real* authority, acting as a constabulary army to keep the peace on Egyptian soil until a settlement was reached, would keep Nasser's prestige deflated and spur him into negotiating; the quicker he wanted the UN force out, the quicker he would have to settle. But if General Edson Burns merely changed his hat from commander of a weary Truce Observation Corps to commander of an Emergency Force subject to Nasser's whims, then the sole result might be another decade of ambush and murder on Israel's borders, and a Canal that stayed under Egypt's capricious control. Already there were ominous signs—especially in Iraq—that Arab mobs, intoxicated by Western retreat, were beginning to push their governments toward a new extremism dictated by the street.

As a minimum, it was urged, the U.S. should proclaim unmistakably that her support of UN principles, and her opposition to unilateral force, did not mean support of Nasser. Better, her influence in the establishment of Suez-Sinai arrangements should be exerted to favor procedures that would hold Nasser in check without ratifying the results of the invasions. Best of all, some recommended, the U.S. should initiate diplomatic talks concurrent with the efforts she would be making in the UN, where progress toward a Middle East solution faced the Russian veto and the Afro-Asian and Soviet voting blocs. All parties should be called to a conference in Washington to seek a peace which then would be offered, with all the force and prestige of an agreement already arrived at, to the UN for approval and guarantees. Could such an agreement be secured? Not if every point of actual vantage had already been surrendered in the area itself. But if made part of a consistent policy of firmness, it had a chance.

There was, moreover, the danger that dilatoriness would only give the Russians

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the chance to make more trouble. With an Emergency Force in effective control, Moscow would have no pretext for meddling. The swifter the progress toward final settlements, the less danger that the USSR might offer her own special kind of "settlements." The Israelis in particular feared that meanwhile, because of the protective American attitude toward Egypt, and Soviet hostility toward Israel, the Syrians and Jordanians might be encouraged to attempt large-scale damage on Israel's borders. This time, with the Sinai campaign as a precedent, small retaliatory raids would no longer suffice, it was feared. The Israelis would be compelled to hit back massively—and then the fat would be in the Soviet fire again.

In administration circles in Washington, no real alarm could be detected over the size and quality of Soviet arms depots in Egypt. "After all," one was advised with a shrug, "Eden has to make it sound frightening. He's fighting for his political life."

Less complacency prevailed in connection with the Soviet warnings which had followed the cease-fire, and with the abortive "recruiting" of Russian and Chinese "volunteers." But the temper in Washington was more angry than anxious over these threats. Officials on a policy-making level seemed inclined to dismiss them as a cheap attempt to curry favor with the Arabs by pretending readiness to rescue the Egyptians after the invasions had been halted and the crisis brought under UN control.

Certainly, the arrival of Communist troops would be a very grave development. But the whole thing was really a "huge bluff." How could those 250,000 Chinese "volunteers" ever *get* to the Middle East? How, in fact, could any sizable amount of Russians get there? Hadn't the Syrian Khalid Bakdash, the Number One Arab Communist, announced months ago on his return from Moscow that there would be no "volunteers," since the Arab states had enough fighting men of their own? One was invited to note how artificially the scare about the "volunteers" had been built up—and then laid to rest. For days the whole Soviet press had been filled with virtually nothing else. Then, overnight, the story had vanished from Russian newspapers.

Admittedly, it had been necessary to warn Moscow that shipment of Communist fighting men into the Middle East would have serious consequences. This the President and Acting Secretary of State Herbert Hoover, Jr., had done on several solemn occasions. But the warnings had been rightly delivered within the UN framework, not by the brandishing of American armed power. For several good reasons, it was explained, this government could and would make no unilateral threats of the "Formosa" variety.

First, we lacked an airtight command of the approaches to the Arab zone comparable to our dominant positions off the Chinese mainland. We did not have comparably secure bases of operation. Nor did we enjoy in the Arab world the total support of regime and people which we had in Nationalist China. On the contrary, appointing ourselves the shield of the Middle East might easily, and rightly, incur the Arabs' enmity for having selected their territory as a potential battleground.

Second, we would have to assume a virtual protectorate over the area to make our guardianship really stick. This would involve us in all the tortured rivalries of the Middle East, the dynastic hatreds, and the Arab-Israeli feud. We would lose our role as arbitrator, and with it all hopes of restoring the Middle East to tranquillity.

Third, and immeasurably most important, we would deal a brutal, perhaps mortal, blow to the UN. Never lose sight of the fact—one was admonished—that the world was in an atomic stalemate. There was also a geographic stalemate in Europe. The balance would be tipped only in the contest for the great uncommitted part of the world —Africa and Asia. In an earlier day, a great power would have settled the matter with gunboat diplomacy, but now a small application of force could set off a world explosion. This left moral force the only remaining instrument. And here again, the

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UN was the only medium we had for imposing a moral settlement.

We had therefore chosen to stand against the Soviets—and against unilateral violence—inside the UN. For the first time in history a great power—the U.S.—in the person of President Eisenhower, with a hydrogen bomb in each pocket, had taken an absolute position in favor of peace. As a result, our prestige had never been higher. Our example was appreciated. We hoped it would be imitated. And if we ever came to grips with the Russians, we wanted as many peoples of the world as we could get on our side.

All over Washington, under many flags and in many of our own government offices, this "new pacifism" on the part of the Eisenhower administration was creating consternation and worse. The group in the Department of State whose advice the President now seemed to be taking—or adapting to his own personal philosophy—had to contend with a loyal dissenting minority. The Central Intelligence Agency was known to be substantially more disturbed than the State Department by the Soviet power threat to the Middle East. At the Pentagon the attitude was still stronger—much closer to the iron-hard position of General Alfred Gruenther, NATO's retiring Chief of Staff, than to that of his predecessor, General Eisenhower.

To the alarmed critics, the doctrine of no salvation except through the UN betrayed a total misconception of the nature of that organization—and of the Russians. It presupposed, they said, a level of morality and disinterestedness which simply did not exist among the nations on the UN roster. Most of all, it credited the Russians with a capacity for principled behavior vastly beyond them. Was it not the truth, instead, that Moscow was totally indifferent to the UN except as a platform from which to broadcast propaganda and spread confusion? Was any further proof needed, *after* Hungary, that the Kremlin operated essentially from a base of power whenever it knew that force would go unchallenged?

The question, the rebuttal maintained, was not of risking world war but of finding ways to avoid it. After losing Eastern Europe through appeasement of Stalin, we had seemed to have learned that it was necessary to draw in advance each line over which the Russians must not step without having to reckon with us. (Failure to do so with the Kaiser and Hitler had led us into two world wars.) Our ultimatum to Moscow had forced the Soviets out of Iran. Our commitments to Greece and Turkey and our airlift to Berlin had stopped the Russians' westward push. We had inadvertently given them the impression we would not fight for Korea, but our instantaneous response to Communist aggression there had at least stayed Moscow's hand. In Indo-China we had forgotten the lesson, and the Communist empire had advanced. But Secretary Dulles nevertheless understood the nature of the Russians. He even went beyond the doctrine of "containment" to the more risky one of "liberation"—at least in rhetoric. It was Dulles, in fact, who gave the policy of "security through firmness" its firmest expression, in the doctrine of "brinkmanship." And yet, suddenly, the free world found itself in November led by a country, still the most powerful in history, whose Chief Executive had reversed its course and appeared to have forgotten all that had ever been learned about the ways and procedures of the totalitarian enemy.

The butchery of the Hungarians might have justified a retaliation based upon that "moral force" of which Washington spoke so piously. Since the UN's creation, had there ever been an act calling more insistently, as a matter of moral principle, for denunciation, condemnation, and punishment than the Soviet crime in Hungary? What bold counter-action would have been too extreme? Could not the UN, at the very least, have placed the Kremlin in quarantine and declared the Soviet Union to be in total economic and diplomatic isolation from the civilized world? Could not the U.S., to express the UN's indignation as well as im-

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plement the administration's campaign slogan of "liberation" for captive peoples, have warned Russia from the UN rostrum to cease and desist? Could not the U.S., at least within the UN Charter and with complete treaty legality, have reinforced her troop garrisons in the territory of her NATO allies as a caution to the Russians?

The UN and the U.S., however, did nothing of the kind. They knew that hardly anything short of war could make the Russians desist in Hungary. They knew that, for Moscow, Eastern Europe had become a prime, indispensable position—an old-fashioned "sphere of influence" from which retreat meant disaster. To challenge this claim, especially at a moment when the Soviets were already knee-deep in Hungarian blood, would have brought war. Knowing this, neither the "international conscience" nor the proponents of the new Washington doctrine of international morality dared to offer such a challenge. The Russians knew we could not even risk a bluff. But they knew they could bluff us in the Middle East, and even come very close to challenging us. And we let them.

The men of the Kremlin respect a clear expression of firmness and strength, but read hesitation as weakness and moderation as fear. To them, our announcements that Soviet armed intervention in the Middle East would be "opposed" by us within the UN suggested only that we would not act outside the UN. This, for the Russians, was as good as proclaiming that we were prepared to do nothing. What, in the last analysis, could the UN do, especially if each further Soviet step into the Middle East were carefully prepared so as to look like a gesture of good will and assistance toward the Arabs? The Russians were probably wrong in concluding that the Middle East meant less to us than Eastern Europe meant to them. In the end, if necessary, we would fight for it, and outside the UN. But we were not making this clear to the Russians. And because we weren't, we were not staving world war off but bringing it closer.

For the Middle East was a rich prize, and the Russians clearly coveted it. The progress they had made lately, while the West stood by wringing its hands, was enormous. In recent weeks they had been able to pose as the champion of Islam (at least the Arabs were convinced), to threaten to send an expeditionary army, to instruct the UN Emergency Force where to march, to demand reparations for Egypt from the three "aggressors" (without offering reparations for Budapest) even before Egypt herself thought of demanding them, and to threaten Israel with extinction. Daily they were winning more allies in the Middle East by an apparent readiness to take risks for them, while we were losing allies by our reluctance to do the same. Actually, the Soviets saw their risks as negligible or nil, since we had never indicated—at least not unequivocally enough for Moscow to understand them—the limits of our endurance. And should American leadership remain paralyzed by its "new morality" and its doctrine of "atomic stalemate," further aggressive moves by Moscow were to be expected in the Middle East: an arms build-up in Syria, a Kurdish "rebellion," troubles fomented from Azerbaijan, the beginnings of a squeeze on Turkey.

IN RETROSPECT, critics of American policy said, it was now evident that we might have blocked all the Soviet gains in the Middle East if, in September of 1955, we and our allies had notified Nasser that we would not tolerate his transformation of Egypt into a Red arsenal. And there was no mystery as to how the "volunteers" could reach the battlefield if Moscow so desired. Satellite Bulgaria, just a quick jump across the unguarded Greek islands, could be converted overnight into a troop-transport air base. But the "volunteers" would not be sent if we made it clear that we would regard them as troops—and use force against them and the regime that sent them.

This would have to be communicated to the Arabs as well as the Russians. But even without "volunteers," Moscow could delay a Middle Eastern settlement by stiffening

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Nasser's back with promises to him and threats to others. This meant we would have to serve notice on Moscow—so sharply as to leave no doubt—that we regarded the Middle East as vital to the free world; that we would resist not only "volunteers," but also fresh armaments and even Communist coups; and that we would resist outside as well as inside the UN. By its omission of Israel and inclusion of Iraq and Pakistan (two states hostile to Israel) the American warning to keep hands off the Baghdad Pact countries actually could be read by Moscow as an admission of U.S. indifference to the fate of the Jewish state. We would specifically have to warn the Russians that Israel's preservation was a vital part of the free world's Middle Eastern policy, and something we would surely fight for. If, through the Syrians or by any other device, Israel were to be attacked and destroyed, the destruction of all other U.S. positions in the Middle East—and thereafter in Europe—would not be far behind. (Israel herself, many felt, should talk back more forthrightly than she so far had to a bully who, after all, had spoken bluntly of her annihilation.)

We were, in any case, not so unprepared in the Middle East as the faint of heart supposed. We had Turkey, Greece, and all of Western Europe. We had friends even among the Arabs. We had the Sixth Fleet. An expressed readiness to use it would be our best guarantee that we would not need to. And we even had behind us the people, and perhaps also substantial parts of the armies, of Russia's satellites in Europe.

Was this not, observers of the Soviet scene maintained, the worst possible time for the Russians to court the risk of war, and was not the Middle East the worst possible place for them to fight one? Indeed, had they ever before permitted the democracies to set the time and place for any test? Was it not an established technique of the Soviets to move against us only when *they* were ready and only where they chose? If they *wanted* war with us now, would they not find ways to precipitate it under circumstances more favorable to themselves? Would they not select as battleground a Korea, an Indo-China, a Berlin, some point on the periphery of their land mass, preferably where they might recruit others to fight for them, rather than issue the challenge in the remote, logistically disadvantageous Middle East? Would they, moreover, pick a fight where they would have to rely for a base on the convulsed and rebellious hinterland of Eastern Europe?

It was improbable that the Soviet empire would ever again attain the strength it enjoyed the day that Khrushchev opened his campaign to downgrade Stalin. That monumental change of line lifted the lid of a Pandora's box whose contents may yet bring the whole Soviet monolith crashing down. The Hungarians could be crushed, and even the Poles tricked and eventually crushed as well—but only temporarily. The slave world had demonstrated that Communist tyranny bore within its system the seeds of its own downfall.

We ourselves, however, could still do much to put off that downfall by granting Moscow easy victories out of misguided idealism, and by retreating before its ever emptier threats. We could speed the downfall only by making plain to the Kremlin that there would be no more easy victories.

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WHY ENGLAND AND FRANCE INTERVENED

Was the Soviet Timetable Upset?

GEORGE LICHTHEIM

LONDON

THE month that failed to shake the world is over. As I write in mid-November, "order" of a sort reigns in Hungary, while in Egypt the ruling military clique must ponder the dangers of embarking on a fresh round. For the moment, the Middle Eastern and the East European upheavals show no sign of merging into a general crisis involving all the powers. Such a merger may yet occur if the reports are true which speak of mounting Soviet intervention in certain Arab states, with the prospect of a fresh outbreak of fighting next spring. Whether or not the present pause is of long or short duration, it enables one to take breath.

One conclusion can already be drawn: the Hungarian catastrophe and the Anglo-French intervention in Egypt were only externally connected. Their mutual interaction was nonetheless so pronounced that at one moment it seemed Moscow might tolerate a semi-independent regime in Budapest, in the interest of reinforcing the hue and cry against Britain and France. In the event, the Kremlin decided to crush the Hungarian rebellion by force. Had it done otherwise, Hungary might have been lost to the Soviet bloc, but Soviet intervention in the Middle East would have been more effective, and might have gone beyond diplomatic bluster and talk of sending "volunteers." In this sense it is arguable that the East European upheaval threw the Russian timetable out of gear, and correspondingly spoiled Nasser's chances of assembling the forces of the Pan-Arab bloc for a war of revenge on Israel, to be followed by the seizure of the oil pipelines and the launching of a military drive against Britain and France. "Is it inconceivable," wrote an influential British commentator in the Conservative *Daily Telegraph*, "that a future Macaulay will write that the workers of Poland and Hungary saved Israel from annihilation and Europe from impoverishment?"

For the moment such questions are unanswerable. It may also be suspected that they contain an element of apologetic self-defense concerning the sudden and surprising Anglo-French intervention against Nasser. Yet even at the start of the crisis it was evident that Israel had triggered something much bigger and more complex than an attempt to "police" the chief Middle Eastern danger zone. There is little point in debating whether Britain and France were motivated by foreknowledge that Israel, in Churchill's phrase, was about to "erupt against Egypt." The relevant fact is that they seized on the Sinai outbreak in order to bring Nasser under control. In so doing they incidentally robbed the Israelis of some of the political and moral fruits of their brief, brilliant campaign. From Israel's viewpoint, a steady supply of arms from France, plus Anglo-French action in the Security Council to counter the pro-Egyptian bias of the majority, would probably have been preferable to what has in fact occurred.

Israel's preferences, however, cannot have weighed very heavily in London and Paris. Here the clash between Egypt and Israel

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GEORGE LICHTHEIM, who reported on the developing Suez crisis in our October issue ("Suez and the Western Powers"), contributes regularly from London. A specialist in Middle Eastern affairs, he writes widely on international politics in general, and the accuracy with which his diagnoses of current events have been borne out have won him a reputation in this country as well as in Britain and Israel. Mr. Lichtheim, though born in Germany, was brought up in Palestine.

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was viewed as an opportunity to restore the threatened balance in the Middle East—and not merely in terms of re-occupying the Suez Canal, in order to give the Western powers a bargaining point in the negotiations over its eventual control. To claim this would be too cynical and would overlook the genuine alarm of the two Western governments in the face of mounting evidence that the Nasser regime was converting Egypt into a Soviet satellite. Not all the facts were known when the Anglo-French ultimatum was launched, but enough was suspected to make London and Paris feel that time was running short. By next spring, Nasser might have had the initiative all along the line.

These considerations could not be openly avowed—least of all in the United Nations, where the Afro-Asian bloc stood ready to protect Nasser against Western intervention. Hence the discrepancy between the real motives of Anglo-French policy and the official reasons given to a bewildered public: that the combatants must be separated, British and French civilians protected, the Canal kept open, oil supplies secured, and the United Nations shocked into action. The fact that some of these explanations were patently absurd has obscured the truth that London and Paris were genuinely fearful of a general war which would give the Russians an even bigger foothold in the Levant. In this sense the talk of "taking police action" was sincere, though it outraged not merely Marshal Bulganin's sensitive conscience, but the legalistic morality of countless indignant critics who demanded to be told by what authority Eden and Mollet had sent out their sheriff's posse. It would of course have been useless to say that there was no hope of getting a warrant from the judge—if this title adequately describes the General Assembly of the United Nations—in advance of evidence that Nasser was really the culprit: evidence which is now beginning to accumulate, though to the Afro-Asian bloc it is not conclusive. The mere fact of having planned to launch war next spring with Soviet aid is no great crime to most Asian or Arab nationalists.

That such plans were in progress is not really doubted even by domestic critics of the action taken by the British and French governments. Egypt and Syria had for months been prepared as Soviet bridgeheads in the Middle East. Shut out in the north by the Turkish link with NATO, able to reach the Mediterranean only through the bottleneck of the Dardanelles, the USSR has been trying to break through the Western cordon by utilizing the Arab-Israeli conflict. Arms and technicians were sent to Egypt and Syria not merely for their own forces, but for Soviet "volunteers" who might in time find their way to these two countries. The timetable probably hinged on the speed with which Egypt, Syria, and Jordan could be brought into action against Israel. Thereafter, the seizure of the Arabian pipelines was to have triggered the long prepared action against the pro-Western regime in Iraq—a country wholly dependent on oil revenues.

Israel sprang the trap before it could close. In so doing its leaders gave Britain and France the opportunity to destroy part of Nasser's military build-up. It is probable, however, that this objective did not rank high among the original aims of Anglo-French policy. It is only now, after the event, that British spokesmen are laying stress on the damage done to airfields already prepared for the use of Soviet planes (most of which seem to have got out to neighboring countries before the bombardment started). It is even suggested that the five-day preliminary air attack was calculated to make large-scale Soviet intervention more difficult. This is mere hindsight. The real purpose of the long-drawn-out bombardment was quite simple: to minimize casualties after landing. In the event, the Allied intervention accomplished less than it might have done if the troops had been put ashore with greater speed, and allowed to occupy the whole length of the Canal before Britain and France were forced to call a halt to the operation. Half-heartedness in planning and execution helped to cripple an enterprise which otherwise might have gone down as

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a successful, though illegal, *coup de force*. If that should turn out to be the net result, history's verdict on the British and French governments will be harsh. But it is unlikely that a full balance sheet will soon be made public. Too many facts are hidden, and will continue to remain hidden while the international situation is as tense as it is now.

Some of the information amassed by the British and French governments about Soviet preparations for a politico-military take-over in the Middle East is now being made public. But important aspects of the situation remain obscure. To cast light on them might involve disclosing some of the most carefully guarded secrets of the Khrushchev-Bulganin visit to Britain last spring. From the semi-official hints scattered at the time, it was inferred that the Soviet leaders had been warned against actions likely to trigger a world war—actions connected with the Middle East, and in particular with Britain's oil supplies. Certainly they were left in no doubt that there was a point beyond which the Western powers could not be pushed without some risk of war. If they chose to make Nasser their stalking horse in the Middle East, they must have done so in the belief that such warnings could be disregarded as long as the United States was not committed to any particular course of action. Indeed, judging from the recent behavior of the Soviet leaders, they seem to have felt for a moment that there was perhaps a chance of joint Soviet-American action to expel Britain and France from the Middle East—a contingency now described as "unthinkable" by President Eisenhower.

Here if anywhere lies the political justification for what must otherwise rank as a desperate gamble on the part of America's two senior European allies: even though they are mere shadows of their former selves, Britain and France may, by their joint action against Nasser, have upset the Soviet timetable and simultaneously impelled the United States government to abandon the fence-straddling position it has occupied during the reign of Mr. Dulles (concerning whom it is tempting, though perhaps unfeeling, to recall Lloyd George's quip about a colleague: "He has been sitting on the fence for so long that the iron has entered into his soul"). Certainly London and Paris had it in mind not merely to galvanize the United Nations into action—an aim which seems actually to have been achieved, though at some cost to international morality during the preliminary stage—but also to serve notice on the U.S. administration that Britain and France do not regard themselves as expendable. That they were so regarded in Washington is perhaps open to doubt; what cannot be doubted is that the Dulles reign allowed this impression to spread among the most responsible British and French officials, and in political circles as widely different in sympathies and instinctive attitudes as British Conservatives and French Socialists. It was left to the Alsops to write in their column (in the New York *Herald Tribune* of November 7) that Britain and France acted as they did because of "their conviction that the American government had already behaved toward them with something really like perfidy."

THE dangers, the pressures, and the frustrations which in the end produced this state of mind have now been exposed to the light of day. If they do not altogether excuse a half-hearted stroke of violence that may prove self-defeating, they at any rate help to explain the motivations underlying it. Not least among them was an impression that the USA and the USSR were engaged in competing for the favors of some of the most destructive forces let loose in the modern world; not just nationalist movements in general, but nationalist regimes such as that of Nasser in Egypt: the dictatorship of a mentally unbalanced military clique with warlike expansionist aims—aims incompatible with the rule of law in a much more profound sense than anything arising out of the so-called "police action" undertaken by the British and French governments without international sanction. The now fashionable American retort that Washington has merely been trying to restrain its

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European Allies from relapsing into "colonial" habits of mind fails to impress people who have watched a Tory government evacuate Egypt, and successive French governments concede virtual independence to Morocco and Tunisia. Evidently something else was at stake.

That something is not difficult to define. It has to do with the manner in which Afro-Asian nationalism has been exploited by the Soviet Union and turned into a battering ram against Western interests which by any standard—conservative, liberal, or socialist—are perfectly legitimate. As someone has remarked, it would not have made the slightest difference to the conflict between the British government and Nasser over the Suez Canal if Britain had been a fully socialized country with its oil industry under state control. The fashionable Afro-Asian claptrap about "capitalist imperialism" breaks down in the face of mounting evidence that a good deal of the nationalist ferment now running through the emergent countries—though fortunately not all of it—is radically hostile to the West *as such*. Because of the political immaturity of Afro-Asian nationalism, and because of its voting strength in the United Nations, the General Assembly must be expected, on any major issue, to defend Afro-Asian nationalist pretensions against what little rule of law is left in the world.

Nor is there much hope, at any rate in the short run, of turning this sentiment against the Soviet Union by exposing the Kremlin's brutal contempt for national aspirations in its own satellite empire. For Afro-Asian moral sentiment is highly selective, and its real yardsticks are racial and political. Just as Asian Communists are unable to understand the fuss made by their European and American comrades about Stalin's crimes, so Asian nationalists are indifferent to Soviet atrocities so long as they are directed against Europeans. The Hungarian blood-bath provoked little, belated vocal indignation in Asia, where on the contrary a tremendous protest storm greeted the Anglo-French intervention in Egypt.

While this state of mind lasts—and it is evidently going to last for quite some time—one cannot expect the United Nations to hold the balance fairly between the national aspirations of the emergent peoples and the permanent interests of the world community. It is only too likely that from time to time some destructive force will try to capitalize on national immaturity, and that in such cases the United Nations will be unwilling or powerless to act—as indeed in the case of Egypt it has proved to be.

This is not to say that military intervention by countries which still try to defend liberal standards is justifiable—it is in fact self-contradictory, and for that reason alone had better not be undertaken. The most that can be claimed on behalf of the British and French governments is that in a desperate emergency they decided to commit a breach of international law in the interest of preventing something a great deal worse. That much, however, must be conceded to them, unless one is to sink to the level of immaturity which expresses itself by howling "colonialist." International life today is not so simple as all that.

On the whole these issues have been more readily understood in France than in Britain, and not merely for the obvious reason that French opinion—apart from the Communists—was almost solidly united in regarding Nasser as a menace. It is probably true to say that the French are indifferent to the Anglo-Saxon brand of moralistic-legalistic reasoning on public affairs. Indeed the habit of discussing political relations in moral terms is regarded by most Frenchmen as a piece of characteristically Anglo-Saxon imbecility, if not as a sinister instance of national hypocrisy. Canting moralists are as rare in France as they are plentiful in Britain—which is not to say that political principles play no part: there is, for example, at the moment a good deal of solidarity in France with the threatened republic of Israel—a sentiment notably different from ordinary political calculation. There is likewise acceptance of the principles embodied in the United Nations charter. But adher-

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ence to the charter is not interpreted to mean that its substance must invariably be sacrificed to the whims of a fluctuating majority in the General Assembly. The French may be uneasy because their government found itself temporarily in disfavor with the majority, but they do not consider that MM. Mollet and Pineau thereby committed an unforgivable crime.

THE British reaction has been different—not least because Britain had a larger stake in the Middle East and has lost a good deal more in material as well as in moral terms. The economic balance sheet alone is bad enough, and to it has to be added the virtual expulsion of Britain from the Baghdad Pact and the unleashing of Arab hostility throughout the area. The Opposition could hardly be expected to take all this lying down, on the plea that peace had to be restored, the Canal safeguarded, or the United Nations brought into action—all highly unconvincing explanations. But the explosion of rage which swept a considerable part of the British middle class—there is plentiful evidence that the working class was relatively indifferent to the issues which excited the articulate section of the public—contained a large ingredient of moral self-hypnosis. It has become the fashion since the war to claim for Britain a degree of moral leadership to which no country can attain in this sinful world, and which the United Kingdom certainly never exercised (as the London *Times* bluntly pointed out in an impressive editorial on November 12). In the political mythology of most liberals and Labor supporters, Sir Anthony Eden is the man who by his reckless folly has deprived Britain of her exalted standing among the nations—an amiable fantasy unrelated to the true state of affairs, but as such a powerful motive force of protest movements among a large and important stratum of the British middle class. Hence the almost unparalleled scenes in the House of Commons, where indeed the Labor party in the end overreached itself by forcing the Prime Minister to speak against such a furious barrage of screams, boos, catcalls, and crude personal abuse that the Conservatives were angered into closing ranks behind him. It was essentially a protest movement by, and on behalf of, the liberal intelligentsia and those sections of the public whom it manages to influence, and its chief effect has been to persuade an important fraction of the electorate that the country will be safer under Mr. Gaitskell than under Eden.

As a demonstration of the continued strength of Protestant-liberal morality among the British middle and professional classes, it was impressive. Anyone responsive to the plea that international politics should be conducted in terms of individual morality must have had his or her withers wrung during the past month. To people not so constituted, the "stage army of the good" looked faintly ridiculous as it paraded around the scene with its banners, its pacifist slogans, its appeals to the United Nations to do something about Egypt (and of course about Hungary too, though Hungary seemed to matter less), and its strident demands for the immediate resignation of Sir Anthony Eden, that man of blood. Possibly the whole furor is evidence that the British are still sound at heart; certainly it disclosed that a good many liberal intellectuals are a little soft in the head. But then that is not exactly a new discovery.

Let the *Times* have the last word:

> A deeper answer would be to observe to those who lament that Sir Anthony Eden's action has lost Britain the moral leadership of the free world, that . . . since the war, outside the one field of colonial emancipation, she never had it. Britain, for instance, did as little about the 1950 United Nations resolution regarding the passage of Israeli ships through the Canal as anyone else. Britain showed as little imaginative leadership in the long wrangle over disarmament as any other nation. Britain's moves towards helping Europe consolidate herself have often been too late. . . . A nation cannot lose what it has never had.

To which one may say "Amen"—and perhaps add that it would be well if the responsible spokesmen of other nations were equally self-critical.

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RUSSIA ENTERS THE LEVANT

The Arab World in Flux

RAY ALAN

NICOSIA, CYPRUS

UNTIL 1914, Britain, the outside power most concerned with the Near East, had worked to preserve the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire as a means of denying footholds within reach of the Suez Canal to her European rivals. Turkey's entry into the First World War, as an ally of Germany, turned this policy upside down and impelled Britain first to undermine the Ottoman Empire with the aid of its disaffected minorities, notably the Hejazi Arabs, and subsequently to fill the vacuum with satellite states governed by Hejazi notables and their henchmen that were militarily, economically, and politically dependent on Britain. The *raison d'être* of these states, like that of the Ottoman regime, from Whitehall's point of view, was to prevent any other power from establishing itself on the approaches to the Suez Canal and to two new British interests, the oilfields of Persia and Iraq. This policy collapsed when the seeds of nationalism it planted proliferated so riotously as to facilitate Italian and German infiltration. Then, after the Second World War had restored British hegemony, a Labor government gave Whitehall's traditional policy a face lifting by attempting to harness and exploit Levantine nationalism through the Arab League—again, for the purpose of excluding actual and potential rival influences. This initiative boomeranged even more grievously than its inter-war prototype, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin's splenetic excesses undermining Britain's moral standing as well as her main strategic and economic footholds in the region, and making even the little that remained of her former position dependent upon American support.

Then Secretary of State John Foster Dulles took over. Having urged Sir Anthony Eden to evacuate the Suez Canal zone so as to please the Egyptians, he launched the Baghdad Pact, which he knew would infuriate them. Having pushed the British into the Pact, against their better judgment, he withheld American participation—as if, belatedly, to appease Egypt. When Egypt and Russia riposted with their arms agreement, he opened an auction for Egyptian favors with his Aswan offer, withdrawing it provocatively when Egypt naturally tried to stimulate the bidding by playing hard to get. This gave Colonel Nasser an excuse for nationalizing the Suez Canal (a project he had been nursing for some time) and an opportunity to attain heroic status in Arab eyes. The hapless Sir Anthony was left to salvage what he could from the débacle while Mr. Dulles, angling again for Egyptian "good will," back-pedaled hard on the issue of international guarantees for Canal shipping. London and Cairo were bound to conclude from this inconstancy that, so far as Washington was concerned, British and French interests in the Middle East—and, of course, Israel—were sitting ducks, and that the crusading pact-monger of yesteryear was now more concerned with hushing up discords, merely because they were discords, than with resolving them, irrespective of the principles involved or the precedents that might be established. Cairo tightened its link with Moscow and intensified its efforts to destroy British influence in Jordan

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A SPECIALIST in Arab affairs, RAY ALAN has been commenting on political developments in the Arab countries for many years. His analyses of the situation in Lebanon (June 1952), Syria (February 1953), Iraq (March 1954), and the Arabian Peninsula ("Stirrings in Araby," April 1956) are among the many first-hand reports he has contributed to COMMENTARY.

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and thereafter liquidate both Israel and the Hashemite regime in Iraq, after whose fall the Baghdad Pact could be torn up. At last London, Paris, and Jerusalem decided it was time to take their own counsel.

Whitehall's inadequacies, in short, did at least have the potentially salutary effect of forcing America to become a Middle Eastern power; but the State Department's inadequacies merely provided a springboard for Russia and so dismayed America's main allies that united Western action to resist Soviet penetration could not even be discussed in an atmosphere of mutual confidence. Today, in an effort to stem the Russophile tide, the State Department is reduced to a pretense of being willing to compete with the Kremlin in calling Britain, France, and Israel to order. That this can never be more than a pretense both Russians and Arabs are aware, for the obvious reason that Russia can always outpace America in a contest of this sort. She is in fact already doing so as I write in the middle of November, reportedly shipping jet aircraft to Syria and inciting Arabs in official Moscow broadcasts to obey Colonel Nasser's call for the sabotage of Western oil installations.

LET us not, however, blame too much on Western policy-makers. Their incompetence has facilitated Soviet penetration, but that penetration would not have occurred had not the Soviet leaders deliberately chosen, as it seems, to wage a new and slightly modified version of Stalin's cold war. It is this Soviet decision rather than any atavistic resurgence of Anglo-French imperialism which is presently inflaming the Middle East. Even without sending Soviet technicians to the Canal zone, it was sufficient for the Kremlin to pour arms into Egypt to insure an explosion one day in the vicinity of Britain's Suez lifeline—if only a major clash with Israel. Once several hundred hand-picked Soviet servicemen were actually on the spot the possibilities would be limitless.

Historians may decide that the Anglo-French-Israeli initiative played into the Russians' hands. It certainly provided them with a rich propaganda harvest. But the shifting shadows of the propagandists' half-world should not be set above the substance of economic and strategic reality. The British, French, and Israelis have, in the short run at least, upset Russian plans by disrupting a process that seemed bound to lead to the progressive Sovietization of Egypt's armed forces and unremitting anti-Western mischief in and around the Canal zone and the Levantine pipeline ports. An important quantity of valuable Soviet equipment has been destroyed or captured (for all official Washington's indignation, American officers at SHAPE are eager for a look at the booty), and the arrival of the Russian technicians has been delayed. Three hundred Russians and Czechs—mostly air force men—already in Egypt when the crisis broke were hurriedly repatriated via the Sudan and Italy to avoid capture.

Of course, once the Anglo-French force has been replaced by UN units, Nasser will be free to employ Soviet or any other technicians he chooses; he will be free, too, to mortgage more Egyptian cotton crops to purchase new Soviet weapons; the Russians could make him a gift of fresh military supplies. But a restraining influence may come from his immediate entourage and military subordinates. The existence of an "underground" within the Egyptian officers' corps alarmed by Colonel Nasser's provocative behavior and inclined to seek a settlement with the West was admitted in Cairo in mid-November when forty-three officers were placed under arrest. Members of the junta who have some understanding of economic realities are bound to advise against further straining Egypt's precarious economy in the pursuance of hazardous military adventures. Many of the hundreds of officers who have acquired comfortable jobs overseeing the civil administration—among them some of Nasser's closest friends and advisers—may be expected, after the double shock of Sinai and Port Said, to exert what influence they have against any policy likely to jeopardize their new mode of life by provoking Britain,

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France, and Israel to further action. The Russians may switch to more subtle tactics and, so long as a UN spotlight is trained on Egypt, refrain from resuming massive arms shipments. But one may be certain that, having now got a political foothold in Egypt, they will not voluntarily withdraw; and so long as the present regime survives in Cairo there is little the West can do to induce them to.

AFTER Egypt, the Kremlin's favorite Middle Eastern state appears to be Syria, whose president, Shukri Bey el-Kuwatli, recently visited Moscow. In the last six months Syria has received from Russia (according to official British sources) 100 tanks and more than 50 self-propelled guns. Syria's attractions in Russian eyes are many: its political immaturity and social and institutional instability; a restless, poverty-stricken peasantry and urban proletariat; a venal press; an army and "security service" whose most influential officers are "national socialists" of three or four different shades but united in their admiration of authoritarianism and the Soviet Union; and, above all, the piplines which carry 25 million metric tons of oil a year from Iraq to the Mediterranean seaboard.

Seventy-five per cent of all the oil Western Europe uses passes, normally, through the Suez Canal, and most of the remainder is piped across Syria. Both supply routes are now cut. Shortly after the Egyptian government ordered the sinking of block-ships in the Suez Canal, Syrian army detachments blew up the three main pumping stations on the Iraq pipelines. This action was taken despite a Syrian government assurance that the oil flow would be maintained and in defiance of threatening noises from Iraq. In the last week of October, Iraqi Premier Nuri Pasha es-Said had let it be known that he would not hesitate to order his army into Syria to protect the pipelines if the need arose.

Iraq's economy is dependent upon her oil royalties, but this was not Nuri Pasha's only consideration. Iraq has for long desired a territorial outlet to the Mediterranean (this desire is never far from the thoughts of Iraqi leaders when they discuss Israel), and here was as good an excuse to acquire one as could be imagined. It was taken for granted in Baghdad that, once in Syria, Iraqi forces would stay on to organize a referendum demanding union of the two countries. Turkey, whose foreign ministry formally drew Whitehall's attention last summer to the dangers inherent in Syria's pro-Egyptian and pro-Soviet orientation, would not have objected, and could have expected to receive the Kurd Dagh and a score or so of Turkish-speaking localities in the Jezireh (northeast of the Euphrates) in the resultant rounding off of frontiers. Britain, which has toyed on several occasions with the idea of tidying up the Levant in this way, would have been delighted. In the absence of the Soviet factor, this solution of the Syrian problem would undoubtedly have been sought, thus sealing off the "northern tier" of the Middle East from Egyption subversion and establishing Iraq as the dominant Arabic-speaking state. But then the Russians suddenly began talking about rockets and volunteers, and Soviet jet aircraft arrived in Syria. Nuri hurriedly changed targets and issued a statement urging the powers to collaborate in liquidating Israel.

It was a bitter day in Baghdad as political circles tried to get used to the idea that the thirty-year-old Hashemite dream of a unified Syro-Mesopotamian empire can henceforth only be realized with Soviet permission—which would mean under Soviet auspices—and without the Hashemites. If the Russians can maintain their hold on Syria we may shortly see the "Greater Syria" and "Syrian-Iraqi Union" campaigns taken over by the Communists. More extraordinary things have happened in recent weeks. These movements have always had a powerful emotional appeal, particularly in northern Syria, but have hitherto failed because of a suspicion that they were sponsored by Whitehall so as to bring Syria and ultimately Lebanon under the same British-manufactured Hashemite umbrella as Iraq and Jor-

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dan; under Communist sponsorship they would be respectably anti-Hashemite and anti-British and in the event of the aging Nuri's departure from the Iraqi scene could inflict irreparable injury on the West.

Meanwhile, as a result of Egypt's misadventures, Iraq has achieved her ambition to become the most powerful Arab League state; but, paradoxically, her hopes of Arab leadership have waned. Colonel Nasser's regime, though battered, survives and is able to claim—though its claim is not generally conceded—enhanced glory. Many Arabic newspapers and radio stations, taking their lead from the Cairo propaganda machine, have compared the "heroic resistance" at Port Said with that at Stalingrad, and have declared that on the very day of the Anglo-French intervention the Egyptian forces in Sinai were soundly trouncing the Israelis; the Jordan press has reported that Tel Aviv had already been evacuated in fear of an Egyptian invasion. Moreover, Arabic papers ask, has not Egypt now a powerful ally whose mere words halted Britain and France and sent both the UN and USA scampering to appease Colonel Nasser? The Colonel's Syrian ally has been strengthened by Soviet support and is now, if the Russians mean what they say, immune for the first time from the possibility of annexation by Iraq. Saudi Arabia which has broken off diplomatic relaions with Britain and France and banned the export of oil to British and French refineries, can for once bask in higher Arab esteem than Iraq, whose government broke off relations with France alone.

Only in Jordan can Iraq still exert some influence. It was very largely the victory of pro-Egyptian elements in the Jordanian elections and the immediate incorporation of Jordan in the Egyptian-Syrian military alliance which decided first Israel, then Britain, to act. Their action so startled Jordan's new leaders—who had just finished proclaiming that, thanks to Gamal Abdel Nasser, Britain and Israel could shortly be written off—that they uttered not a word of protest when Iraqi forces arrived in their midst, ostensibly to defend Jordan but primarily to prevent them from doing anything silly. The Syrians and Saudis, too, sent troops into Jordan, and occupied a few villages in the extreme north and south. The outcome could be a *de facto* partition of the crumbling kingdom between Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq, which would liberate Britain from her now unwanted, and extremely expensive, obligation to subsidize and defend Jordan, and would give Israel an opportunity to secure a viable eastern frontier. But such a development would only be welcome to Whitehall if Iraq got the lion's share, including the military airfields at Amman and Mafraq, to which the RAF might then continue to have access (the new Jordanian government has already eased it out of Amman).

Not that Anglo-Iraqi relations are what they were. As Iraq's economic situation has improved, thanks to her oil, even veteran champions of her British connection have tended increasingly to demand that she follow a more independent policy. Anti-British slogans were the most prominent and the most popular at the last Iraqi election. Even the present government was obliged to press Britain to wind up her air bases in Iraq and abrogate the Anglo-Iraqi treaty. The two remaining pillars of the Anglo-Iraqi association are the British-managed Iraq Petroleum Company, which Iraqi extremists aim to nationalize, and the Hashemite royal family, which owes its status to Britain and whose Sunnite religion is a barrier between itself and the mass of Iraq Arabs, who are Shiites. For all practical military and diplomatic purposes the Anglo-Iraqi alliance is now a mere fiction, despite the Baghdad Pact. At the recent conference of Asian members of the Baghdad Pact in Teheran it was Iraq which took the lead in urging Britain's exclusion from the alliance.

IT HAS been obvious for some years that Britain could only appease the pacemakers of Arab nationalism by resigning herself to the liquidation not only of Israel but of every one of her own "imperial" and economic interests in the Middle East. Treaty

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after treaty might be abrogated, and base after base abandoned, but always the Arab oligarchies, unable or unwilling to tackle the appalling social and economic problems facing them, would still be forced to channel domestic dicsontent into xenophobic and chauvinistic outlets, and divert the mob at their gates with foreign policy disputes. Britain, the power with the most extensive interests in the region, was bound to be the biggest target, and would be an even more essential target if ever Israel were liquidated. Clearly, unless she were willing to face economic dislocation and geopolitical eclipse, she would one day have to make a stand—over Suez, or Aden, or Iraqi, or Persian Gulf oil. Equally clearly, Britain's stand would be facilitated, and her strategic responsibilities to the Western alliance better fulfilled, if she possessed a base (in the widest sense of the word: not simply a military base) in the Levant safeguarded by local sympathy and understanding rather than by a mere treaty which might be abrogated, Arab fashion, overnight. Such a base could have been sought in Israel. But there was the problem of "Arab susceptibilities"; and so an attempt was made to improvise one in Cyprus instead, in disregard of Cypriot and Greek susceptibilities, with the result that Britain found herself with a colonial war on her hands.

COLONEL Nasser's hostile intrigues have now forced Britain to make her stand—but prematurely and in circumstances highly unfavorable to herself. It is arguable that she has got herself so far out on a limb that nothing can save her now. But if the West, collectively, were to resign itself to this view, the whole region would fall within the Kremlin's orbit. The issue is no longer the relatively parochial Anglo-Arab tug of war, which has occupied the Middle East in the intervals of the parallel Arab-Jewish contest for so many years, but the Soviet government's decision to make the Levant a cockpit of cold war. A British withdrawal from the region could only be conceivable in present circumstances if America were willing to step in physically, and in strength, instead: it would almost certainly necessitate American intervention.

In this new situation the West has only three dependable assets: Turkey, Israel, and the British military force, temporarily including some French units, based on Cyprus. (The present Iraqi government, though not the Iraqi people, is anti-Soviet; but in times of crisis, as Britain knows to her cost, Iraqi governments are notoriously fragile reeds.) Israel, however, despite her Sinai victory, is militarily weak. And the British suffer the disadvantage of having both their headquarters base (Cyprus) and their only outlying mainland bases (in Jordan) in what is in effect hostile territory, where stores and communications are liable to be sabotaged and troops to be attacked. Worse, Britain's forcible retention of Cyprus has alienated Greece, until recently one of NATO's most dependable bastions, but today disillusioned and angrily neutralist: were Russia to attack Britain and Turkey many Greeks would applaud. The West's three assets, evidently, don't add up to very much. What can be done?

Firstly, Israel must be strengthened, both militarily and diplomatically. The moment her neighbors realize that she is no longer a mere fruit for the picking they will be less inclined to play with their Stalin tanks—and less inclined to solicit them in the first place. If the United States continues to follow the policy of leaving this pro-Western nation vulnerable while its anti-Western neighbors pile up Soviet arms, she will bear a terrible responsibility. Further, there should be no question of allowing Nasser to reestablish his Soviet-stocked bases in Sinai, to start his mischief all over again. If the whole of Sinai is demilitarized, and inspected periodically by the UN, border tension between Egypt and Israel—and *fedayeen* outrages, in this sector, at least—will become a thing of the past. The width of the desert will see to that. *Any government, Communist or other, which works at the UN against demilitarization of Sinai will reveal itself beyond doubt as striving to perpetuate*

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instability in the area for its own purpose.

Secondly, Britain should endeavor, with American support, to induce the Israel government to lease her (within the framework of a mutual-aid pact) a major base in the Negev and naval facilities at Elath and somewhere on the Mediterranean. She could then close her bases in Jordan, without waiting to be thrown out, and progressively reduce her establishment in Cyprus, thus clearing the way for a generous offer to Greece and ultimately a tripartite (Britain-Greece-Turkey) agreement on the island's future which would bring Greece back into the Western fold. With a British base in Israel, neither Egypt nor Syria would be inclined to permit a build-up of Soviet military or political strength on its territory: not even the most irresponsible government likes to contemplate the possibility of its territory becoming a battlefield. And freedom of navigation through the Suez Canal would no longer be in doubt.

One can already hear the Whitehall suicide squad bleating, as it shuffles among its ruins: "But what about Arab susceptibilities?" The coffin of the last Foreign Office man to be evacuated from the Middle East will probably bear this inscription. Nothing Britain can now do in the Middle East will damage "Arab susceptibilities"—in the sense meant here—as much as the bombing and occupation of Port Said. If Britain or America had had a defense pact with Israel earlier this year, the Egyptians, Britons, and Frenchmen who died at Port Said would still be alive; Israel's Sinai campaign would not have been necessary. It is worth noting, incidentally, that public opinion throughout the Arab states believes that British forces already have a base in Israel and cooperated with the Israelis in clearing Sinai. The press of Britain's erstwhile ally Jordan announced that British forces took Gaza and then handed it to Israel. As well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb.

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ERUPTION IN EAST EUROPE

A Myth Destroyed and a Revolution Betrayed

HUGH SETON-WATSON

THE "thaw" in Poland goes back at least to the fall of Beria in June of 1953. One consequence of this event was the defection to the West of a high official of the Polish security police named Josef Swiatlo. This man's revelations on the misdeeds of his service, and on the scandals and intrigues in the highest political circles in Poland, which were widely used by Western broadcasting services and in the Free Europe Committee's balloon-borne leaflets and pamphlets, undoubtedly helped the demoralization of the Polish leadership and stimulated opposition from within the party. The security police were generally downgraded, as in the Soviet Union. At the end of 1954 Radkiewicz, for ten years boss of the police, was transferred to the Ministry of State Farms. During 1955 pressure was gradually relaxed. In particular, there was considerably more cultural contact with the West, and it was noticed that delegates from Poland to international meetings spoke with surprising freedom.*

A new phase started with the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist party in February 1956. The First Secretary of the Polish Communist party,† Boleslaw Bierut, died in Moscow shortly after the Congress, at which he had led his party's delegation. It will be remembered that the Czech Communist leader, Klement Gottwald, died immediately after returning from Stalin's funeral in March 1953, and that the Bulgarian Communist leader, Georgi Dimitrov, died when undergoing treatment in the Soviet Union in 1949. The deaths of all three occurred at turning points in Soviet policy (the breach with Tito, the death of Stalin, and the campaign against Stalin's memory). Whether the Soviet leaders expedited Bierut's death or not, it is certain that Khrushchev personally intervened in the selection of his successor, Edward Ochab. It appears also that he told the Polish Communists that they must make themselves more popular with their own people. During the following months a remarkable freedom of opinion appeared in the Polish press, especially in economic and literary journals, and in the organ of the youth movement, *Po Prostu*. There was talk of making the Sejm a real parliament, with real debates on real problems. There were bitter attacks on the privileges of the higher bureaucracy, with their special shops for luxury goods. The regime's statements about rising standards of living were exposed as lies. One article, for instance, on the much boasted price reductions, pointed out how a coat that had cost some 300 *zloty* was removed from the shop windows at the time of the price reduction, then reappeared at 500 *zloty*, was again removed at a second price reduction and reappeared again, with leather

PROFESSOR of Russian history at the University of London's School of Slavonic and East European Studies, HUGH SETON-WATSON is widely recognized as a leading authority on the Soviet Union and its satellites. Mr. Seton-Watson was educated at Winchester and Oxford, and served as a member of the British legation in Rumania and Yugoslavia in 1940-41. His books include *Eastern Europe Between the Wars* (1945), *The East European Revolution* (1950), *The Decline of Imperial Russia 1855-1914* (1952), and *From Lenin to Malenkov* (1953). Readers will recall his two previous articles in COMMENTARY, "The Colonial System of the USSR" (May 1953), and "Can We Free Eastern Europe Now?" (November 1953).

*See Norman Birnbaum's article "Science, Ideology, and Dialogue" in this issue.—ED.

†The party's official title is Polish United Workers party (PZPR), but it is in fact a Communist party, and it seems simpler so to refer to it.

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instead of plastic buttons, costing 735 *zloty*.

At the end of June came the Poznan rising. This was followed not by repression but by official admissions of failure and by still fiercer denunciation in the press of social injustice and of the economic misery in which the workers lived. Bulganin's remarks about Poznan, and the mention of it in the Soviet Communist party's resolution on the "cult of personality" as being the work of foreign imperialists, found no echo in speeches by First Secretary Ochab and Prime Minister Cyrankiewicz, who attributed the revolt to economic conditions. Economists freely discussed the existence of large-scale concealed unemployment, or denounced the Leninist theory of the division of the peasantry into three classes of "kulaks," "medium," and "small."

The trials of persons arrested after the Poznan rising were conducted with remarkable fairness, the violent methods of the police were exposed and condemned by the judges, and the sentences were lenient. Meanwhile pressure came from within the party for the restoration of Gomulka, the former Communist leader who had been purged in 1949 for nationalism. Already in the spring, the closest collaborator of the late Bierut, Jakub Berman, and the former security boss, Radkiewicz, had been removed from the party's Politburo. In October they were followed by the economic dictator of the postwar years, Hilary Minc. The climax came with the arrival in Warsaw of the strongest team of Soviet leaders that had ever been outside Russia at one time since the Soviet regime was created. It is interesting to note that the group included not only Khrushchev and Mikoyan, who were identified with the pro-Tito course of the last two years, but also Molotov and Kaganovich, the closest friends of Stalin. Whether this means that all were agreed with regard to Poland, or that they had all come in order to keep an eye on each other, is anybody's guess. What is certain is that they were unable to intimidate the Poles.

The Polish Central Committee on October 22 elected Gomulka First Secretary of the party. The most devoted servants of the Soviet Union in the old Politburo (Mazur, Jozwiak, and Zenon Nowak) were not reelected, nor was the Soviet Marshal Rokossovsky. But the former First Secretary, Ochab, remained a member of both the Secretariat and the Politburo, and Cyrankiewicz remained Prime Minister. One of Gomulka's first acts was to purge at least half the provincial committee of the party, putting in his own men. He also placed his old comrade, General Spychalski, as Deputy Minister of War, and another Communist who had suffered imprisonment, General Komak, as Head of the Security Corps.

An interesting feature of the Polish Communist party since 1944 is that, at least at the Central Committee level, its leadership has remained rather stable. Only 22 per cent of the persons who were members in 1948 had been removed by 1956. A similar proportion (28 per cent) is found in Bulgaria, but the turnover is much higher in Czechoslovakia (58 per cent) and in Hungary (50 per cent).* It is worth stressing that the Polish Central Committee which in October 1956 voted for Gomulka was essentially the same as that which in December 1948 had condemned him. They were of course well aware of the pressure and discontent both within and outside the party. Nevertheless they deserve credit for their ability to make concessions, and to stand up to Soviet pressure. By doing so, they may have saved the Communist party for a time —which as Westerners we may regret—but they also saved Poland from immediate invasion. Their Hungarian colleagues proved incapable of this elementary wisdom.

THE events in Hungary can also be traced back to 1953. In that year, in July, the autocrat of the Communist party, Matyas Rakosi, while retaining the First Secretaryship of the party, gave up the Premiership to Imre Nagy, who introduced a "new course" in economic policy, and even re-

*The comparisons are: Bulgaria 1954 and 1945, Czechoslovakia 1954 and 1949, Hungary 1954 and 1948.

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laxed the political pressure. Nagy was removed in 1955, within a few weeks of the "resignation" of Malenkov as Soviet Premier. He was accused of neglecting the development of heavy industry, and of building up the People's Front into a political rival to the party. The supremacy of Rakosi was reasserted, with a certain Hegedus as his Prime Minister. The party reverted to a "hard" course, including the promise of much more rapid collectivization of agriculture. Economic conditions continued to get even worse. The renewed political pressure did not, however, silence the Hungarian intelligentsia. In the winter of 1955 a number of writers who were members of the Communist party were severely rebuked by the party leadership for their criticisms. The spirit of protest could not be checked, and it was encouraged by the knowledge that Tito, who was now being courted by the Soviet leaders, would never consent to the survival in power of his bitterest enemy.

Rakosi fought hard for his position. The condemnation of the "cult of personality" by the Soviet 20th Congress was a hard blow. But he had the effrontery to admit, not only that his party had been guilty of this sin (he himself being of course the idol), but that Laszlo Rajk, the "nationalist" Communist executed in 1949, had been innocent of the offenses charged against him —and yet to stay in power.

But pressure from the people, and especially from the intellectuals, was growing irresistibly. The writers' and youth organizations were the spearhead, and in both it was at first rebellious Communists who took the lead. Large public discussions were held in literary circles known as the Petoefi Club (in honor of Hungary's revolutionary poet of 1848). These meetings openly clamored for Rakosi's fall. The Poznan example, and further pressure from Tito, also probably helped to convince Moscow that Rakosi had to be scrapped. He was removed from the First Secretaryship on July 18, but his successor was Ernö Gerö, his closest assistant, hardly less dictatorial or less subservient to Moscow than Rakosi himself. During the summer the literary revolt went on. In September the conference of the Writers' Union elected a new leadership consisting of rebellious Communists and non-Communists. Among them were persons who had only just emerged from years of prison. None of the party watch-dogs was re-elected. A few weeks later the rehabilitated victims of the 1949 purge were publicly reinterred.

The Hungarian revolution was precipitated by events in Poland. A demonstration of students laid a wreath on the statue of General Bem, the Pole who had led Hungarian forces in the revolutionary war of 1849. The crowds began to shout for Imre Nagy, whose two years of "new course" had made him popular even among non-Communists, and who was the obvious candidate for the role of Hungarian Gomulka. But Gerö saw fit at this stage to make a broadcast of Stalinian rigidity. Having met both Khrushchev and Tito in the Crimea, and having made the pilgrimage to Belgrade, he no doubt felt strong enough to ignore the popular mood: perhaps he was simply incapable of recognizing it. Nagy himself, who by now had been re-admitted to the party's Central Committee, made a mild speech to a crowd in the square in front of the Parliament which did not satisfy anyone. The crowd then toppled over the giant statue of Stalin, and approached the radio station. It was at this point, on the evening of October 23, that the security police opened fire. The crowd did not disperse, and it was reinforced by armed workers and soldiers.

In the early morning hours of the 24th, Soviet tanks entered Budapest, and it was announced a little later that the government, under the Warsaw Pact, had asked the Soviet army to help restore order. The Warsaw Pact is, of course, a military alliance between states directed against foreign countries (the NATO powers and a re-armed Germany), not against the peoples of the signatory states. It is still not clear who invited the Russians, or indeed whether there was an invitation at all. Imre Nagy some days later denied that he had done so. It was in the late morning of the 24th that

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the radio referred to Nagy as Prime Minister: when and by whom he was appointed, was not stated. During the 24th the Soviet tanks appear to have taken no part in the fighting. On the morning of the 25th a large crowd assembled in the Parliament square. It was at this point that Soviet tanks fired into the unarmed mass of workers and students, killing six hundred persons.

Far too little still is known of the confused pattern of events in the whole country. But it would seem that this massacre by Russians was the decisive moment. Thereafter the army, which had hitherto been mainly neutral, though some soldiers had joined the masses, came over to the revolution. The Hungarian nation rose against the Russians, not only in Budapest but in most other large towns. All western Hungary was soon in their hands, but the position east of the Danube has never been made clear.

IT MIGHT be thought that the Hungarians behaved recklessly, that they were wrong not to follow the example of moderation set by the Poles. But this is a baseless criticism. The decisive difference between events in Hungary and in Poland lies in the different attitudes of the Communist leaderships. Ochab and Cyrankiewicz were wise enough to make way for Gomulka, and Gomulka was strong and clever enough to take and hold power. In Hungary the party was built around the autocracy of Rakosi. In both countries Communism as such was detested by the vast majority of the nation. The Communist parties were small minorities, but while the Polish party was an intelligent minority, the Hungarian was a purely one-man show. Three provocative blunders made an explosion inevitable: Gerö's Stalinist speech of October 23, the invitation to the Russians to intervene, and the massacre in front of the Parliament. After this, what could the Hungarians do but fight or surrender? There was no opening for moderation or maneuver. That they chose to fight is a proof not of recklessness but of courage and national unity.

Dictatorships are as old as the human race, but totalitarianism is a creation of the 20th century made possible by mass means of communication and by the total will to power of secular religions. Totalitarianism, with its all-pervading propaganda, its security police, its invasion of private life and belief, and its systematic atomization of society, has long seemed invincible from within. Only war destroyed Hitler, and Stalin survived even war. But the Hungarians have shown us that a united nation can unseat a totalitarian regime in two days.

The second lesson is that the forces which led the revolution were precisely those on which the regime had counted for support. The intellectual youth were precisely those children of workers and peasants whom for the last eight years the regime had been bringing up, in its indoctrinated schools, colleges, and universities, to be the brains of totalitarianism. It was they who started and led the movement of the nation against the regime. The first mass support of the revolution came from the Budapest working class, in whose name for so many years the Communists have declaimed their stale Leninist rhetoric. Csepel Island, the biggest industrial concentration in Hungary, sent its armed worker guards to join the demonstrators on October 23. As I write, a week after the second Soviet onslaught of November 4, fighting is still going on in two main centers. One is Csepel Island. The other is Dunapentele, until recently known as Sztalinvaros (Stalin City), the new industrial town built round the new steel mill on the Danube near Mohács, where four hundred and thirty years ago Hungary's armies were destroyed by the Turks, invaders humane and honorable when judged by the standards of Khrushchev and Zhukov. The working class, then, provided the core of the nation's resistance. The third factor of course is the Hungarian army. The old army was destroyed in 1944-45; part of it went into exile in Austria and Germany, and what remained in Hungary was purged and disbanded. The new army has been rebuilt since 1947. It is ironical that Moscow,

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in its desire to train cannon fodder to fight the West, should have allowed Hungary—like Rumania and Bulgaria—to exceed the limits laid down in the peace treaties. Even so, the army was not large or very well equipped. Great care was however lavished by Rakosi's regime on the indoctrination, in Marxist-Leninist fanaticism, of the new army, and especially of its officers. But when the crisis came, the army went with the nation against the regime.

Intellectual youth, workers, and army joined in the Hungarian revolution. The rest of the nation—the peasants and what was left of the old bourgeoisie—were of course behind them. Only the security police were against, and they were quickly overcome. The nation fought the Russian army, and forced it to withdraw. By the middle of the week the revolution had won its first battle, and the adversaries stood facing each other. In Moscow there was irresolution. The Soviet leaders, never united since Stalin died, must have been more uncertain, more fearful of each other and of the world, than they had ever been.

It was at this moment that Israel saw fit to invade Egypt, and that Eden and Mollet saw fit to do likewise.

For Israel's plight I have nothing but sympathy. It has long been clear that Nasser was building his strength up to destroy her. It has also long been clear that Nasser is an implacable enemy of the West, concerned not to obtain satisfaction of legitimate Egyptian claims, but to destroy all European and American interests throughout Africa and Western Asia, to create his own Egyptian empire from the Shatt-el-Arab to the Maghreb, selling himself to Moscow or anyone else for the purpose. All this has long been clear to everyone except the government of the United States. That Israel should resort to desperate action to save herself is humanly understandable. Even so, the moment was terribly chosen. Now for the first time since 1947 a chance appeared of getting the Russians out of Europe, of restoring European peace, and the independence of European nations captive since the 1930's. A change of this immensity would have transformed the whole Middle East as well, would have deflated Nasser and strengthened Israel. It was hardly to be expected of the leaders of Israel, facing a mortal threat, that they should take so wide a view. But of the leaders of Britain and France this must be expected. It was for them to see the meaning of the Hungarian revolution, to advise Israel accordingly, and to bring this to the notice of the government of the United States.

This is precisely what Sir Anthony Eden and M. Mollet did not do. This is the failure for which history will never forgive them. They turned their backs on Europe in Europe's great moment of hope. Then was the chance for Britain to take the initiative, together with the United States, France, and Germany, to approach the Soviet leaders with firmness, tact, and imagination, to begin new negotiations on European security, on the twin problems of German unity and East European independence, to make it clear that the West was willing to offer a price for Soviet concessions, that it was in Moscow's interest to examine this price rather than to destroy Hungary. This was the only way to European peace, which we have not known since 1933 or perhaps since 1914. This was the first moment since 1947 when there was a chance to begin a political action that had a real chance of securing it.

But Sir Anthony's mind was elsewhere. No doubt he would be hurt by the suggestion that he does not care about Europe. But it is true. He believes sincerely in Anglo-French friendship (what civilized Briton does not?) but he conceives it in narrow diplomatic terms, with vague visions of Clémenceau and Cambon and Edward VII. Of the Europe that begins beyond the Rhine he appears to have no notion. Certainly his complaints against Nasser are sound enough. Certainly he has good grounds to be disappointed with the record of the United Nations and of the United States in the Middle East. But even if his

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action had secured a just and stable peace in the Middle East, it would not have justified the betrayal of Europe. As things are now going, it looks as if in addition to betraying Europe he will have destroyed all European influence from Casablanca to Basra and from Aleppo to Lake Victoria.

Not only did Sir Anthony turn his back on Europe: he did not even act quickly. If ever there was a war which was too serious to be left to the generals, it was this one. While the airmen conscientiously pounded away at Egyptian airfields, and the invasion forces waited day after day in Cyprus, all those whom Britain and France had insulted or ignored had time to work themselves into a frenzy of hate. The Soviet leaders quickly saw that no one was going to pay any attention to Europe, and they gave the word for the butchery. As I write a whole week later, the butchery is still going on, Hungarian children are still dying as they try to destroy Soviet tanks with gasoline bombs, Hungary's workers are still on strike, and the representatives of the "Socialist Sixth of the World" are using starvation to force them back to work. And all the time nobody is considering help to Hungary. The United Nations are fairly fully occupied in saving the human race from the atomic war which Sir Anthony's genius and Khrushchev's blood-lust almost unleashed. And when the United Nations does find time to talk about Hungary, that splendid moralist Nehru instructs his representative to abstain.*

THE outlook in Europe is now absolutely uncertain. While the United Nations talks, the Soviet armies may move again, against Poland, or Austria, or Yugoslavia. Only the President of the United States can stop this. He has been as sorely tried by his allies as he has tried them by his complacent inactivity. But it is clear that the responsibility and the decision now are Eisenhower's, and his alone.

In Hungary armed resistance and the general strike will probably be broken in the end by slaughter and starvation. But what will the conquerors do then? The puppet Premier, Janos Kadar, had quite a good record as a "nationalist" Communist who had suffered torture in prison and had been the leader of the "liberalizing" group within the Politburo since the spring. It seems that when Nagy decided to associate himself with the people's demands for a multi-party regime and for neutrality, Kadar deserted to the Russians. But it is at least possible that he was captured or threatened or tricked. Until more is known, it would perhaps be unjust to regard him as a Quisling: he may prove to have been only a Pétain. What seems hardly open to doubt, is that he cannot hope to set up a Hungarian government. The hatred of the whole nation, especially of the working class, denies him any support but a few thousand security police athirst for vengeance. Nor are economic promises likely to help him much. He may promise cheaper bicycles for the workers and higher potato prices for the peasants, but his protectors are killing their children and have robbed them of their country.

In 1945 the Soviet army looted, raped, and murdered in hot blood, but it was avenging—even if on the innocent—the martyrdom of the Russian people at the hands of Hitler and his satellites. In 1945, even in Soviet-occupied Germany there were millions who felt guilt, and who hoped that the much wronged Russians would help their country to build a new social order once the immediate bitterness of war was past. In Hungary and Rumania too this hope was felt by many. Instead they got the regime of lies, robbery, torture, and colonial subjection symbolized by Rakosi, Ulbricht, and Gheorghiu-Dej. After eight years the Hungarians overthrew it. Back came the Russians. This time they did not confine themselves to atrocities in the heat of battle. They hanged and shot their prisoners in cold blood. They have killed workers' children who leaped at their tanks. They have created famine to force workers to stop a strike. They have invited Hungarian officers to a conference and then arrested them, invited

*See G. F. Hudson's article, "The Paradox of Jawaharlal Nehru," elsewhere in this issue.—ED.

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soldiers to surrender and then shot them. This time they are not proud conquerors avenging their country, but perjured butchers. Nowhere in Hungary can they hope for anything but hatred and contempt. Russian soldiers are human. Even their morale will be severely strained.

MEANWHILE the rest of East Europe trembles in silent horror. The Czechs and Slovaks made no protest. Last spring there were criticisms of the government at a writers' conference, and in May the university students (always the bravest people in the Czech nation, and seldom supported by the rest) put forward demands not only for the rights of the universities, but for political liberty. But nothing came of this. The Communist leadership is colorless. Since Gottwald died in 1953, there has been no "cult of personality," and there have never been "nationalists" among Czech Communists. Slansky, Beria's man, executed in 1952, was the last person to deserve this epithet. In Slovakia there are "nationalist" Communists, and some of these escaped the death penalty and have been released. But they were, and are, in no position to organize opposition. Meanwhile the workers have enough to eat, and even decent clothes to wear: Czechoslovakia for more than a year has been more prosperous than any other "People's Democracy."

Rumania and Bulgaria, nearer to Russia, are less socially and culturally advanced, and appear to be an object of negotiation between Moscow and Belgrade. The Rumanian Communist party is so weak, and so detested, that there can be no question of a "nationalist" Communist government supported by the people. This does not of course mean that there are not rivalries among its leaders. Rumanian and Bulgarian Communist delegations have visited Yugoslavia with Soviet approval, and in both countries official spokesmen have been very polite about President Tito and the Yugoslav road to socialism. But in the power apparatus there has been no change.

Yugoslavia's attitude is a curious mixture of doctrinaire complacency and straightforward funk. President Tito's vanity may be flattered by the compliments from Bucharest and Sofia, but he is too good a realist not to see that his country is as dangerously encircled as in 1949. Yet as doctrinaire Marxist-Leninists, the Yugoslav leaders appear convinced that a multi-party system in Hungary is "counter-revolution"; that there is a "correct" line, which only a Communist party can find, and which, in spite of "mistakes" by Rakosi, Gerö, and Co., can and inevitably must be found; and that as both Khrushchev and Kadar have admitted "mistakes" in the past, they must sincerely wish, and genuinely be able, to find the "correct" solution once the fighting has stopped. This at least is how they talk, and is probably how they think. It would be unwise to assume that such schizophrenia is not possible. Whether Yugoslavia will escape destruction is another matter.

And the West? It is still possible to help Hungary, not only with relief to refugees but by massive economic help to the starving nation. If the United States and the West European governments offer such help, unconditionally and on a vast scale, Moscow will have either to agree or to give help herself on the same scale. In either case Western action will have helped Hungary. The West can also give moral help to the Hungarians in their continued and unflinching moral resistance to the Russians. Demonstrations of the unanimity of European opinion, of all classes, all professions, and all political views, are not without their effect on the Russian people. Finally, the West must reopen the whole problem of European security, that is, of the unity of Germany and the independence of Eastern Europe. For this there must be unity of Western Europe and America, a unity transcending the purely military and economic fields. The murder of Hungary was a blow also at Europe. The only way to restore Hungary and to save ourselves from destruction is to create the unity of Europe, which Eisenhower has forgotten, Mollet ignored, and Eden betrayed.

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THE PARADOX OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Democracy at Home, and Abroad—?

G. F. HUDSON

THE events in Egypt and Hungary have brought into focus as an issue in Indian politics the "double standard" which Nehru has long maintained in his judgments on world affairs as between the Western powers and the states of the Sino-Soviet bloc. After the Indian delegation to the United Nations had abstained from voting on the resolution passed by the Assembly (November 4) calling for a cessation of Soviet military intervention in Hungary, and the executive of the Congress party under Nehru's direction had adopted a resolution strongly condemning the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt but referring to the Soviet action with only the mildest expression of regret, Jayaprakash Narayan, the former Socialist leader who has now retired from active politics but remains a highly respected and influential personality in Indian affairs, directed against the Prime Minister what was perhaps the most damaging attack made on him since India became independent.

Narayan was particularly scathing about the statement reported to have been made to a correspondent by Krishna Menon, that the events in Hungary were a "domestic affair" of that country. It is as yet too early to gauge how much effect such criticism may have, but there is evidence of serious dissatisfaction in Indian political circles with the strange foreign policy partnership of Nehru and Krishna Menon which has kept "neutral" and "uncommitted" India leaning so persistently to the Communist side through a series of international conflicts.*

Narayan might also have referred, though it does not appear that he did, to the anti-Israeli bias which has been so marked a feature of Indian foreign policy. India has not merely declined to have diplomatic relations with Israel, but in sponsoring the invitations to the Bandung conference, which was supposed to represent all independent nations of Asia and Africa, agreed without demur to exclude Israel on the demand of the Arab states. Since India is not, like Pakistan or Indonesia, a Moslem country, this partiality cannot be attributed to any religious ties, and it ill accords with the Indian claim to be concerned as a matter of principle with the independence and security of all Asian peoples. It may perhaps be adequately explained by the diplomatic importance to India—particularly as part of her rivalry with Pakistan—of cultivating good relations with the Arab countries. But it has to be noted that Delhi's attitude to Israel is in accordance with the permanent anti-Zionism of the Communist bloc, and thus ties in with the pro-Communist leanings of Indian foreign policy in other respects.

How does this state of affairs arise in a country which is governed by a powerful non-Communist party which is in no

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WITH Jawaharlal Nehru scheduled to visit Washington this month, it is hoped that G. F. HUDSON'S essay on the enigma of the Indian Prime Minister will serve a purpose of practical as well as purely intellectual understanding. Mr. Hudson's authoritative commentaries on international affairs are well known to readers of this magazine. He is director of the Center for Far Eastern Studies of St. Antony's College in Oxford, England.

*Responding to these criticisms, Nehru on November 19, in the Indian Parliament, criticized the Soviet intervention in Hungary: "The fact is that the Soviet Army is there against the wishes of the Hungarian people." In the UN, India, with Ceylon and Indonesia, introduced a resolution on November 20 calling on Hungary to admit UN observers.—ED.

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way dependent on local Communist support in domestic politics, and has no obvious reason to align itself with the Soviet bloc in world affairs? The answer cannot be a simple one; indeed, so complex are the political phenomena of contemporary India, and so important are factors which seem to operate in a direction contrary to the pro-Communist trend that many observers deny that any such trend really exists.

NEHRU proclaims—and there is no reason to doubt his sincerity in this—that he is trying to make India into a modern industrial country without the use of totalitarian methods, and insofar as he can show successes in this endeavor, he is committed to a mortal challenge of the Communist claim to have found the only way of rapid economic progress for underdeveloped countries. Moreover, Nehru has deliberately chosen, without any kind of compulsion, to remain in the "Indo-British" Commonwealth, and this course has been in striking contrast to the attitudes of Vietnamese and Indonesian nationalists toward their former imperial rulers. In many ways, indeed, the policies of the new India have been so moderate, so adverse to the totalitarian way of life, and so little affected by the anti-Western rancor prevalent in many other areas of Asia and Africa that it becomes all the more difficult to understand why it is that the Indian government constantly shows such a pronounced one-sidedness in its approach to international issues beyond the sphere of immediate Indian interests. The explanation must be sought in states of mind which are in part characteristic of Indian educated opinion in general, and are in part special to Nehru himself.

In the first place, it must be borne in mind that India has no tradition of foreign policy because it is one of the consequences of colonial status that the external relations of a dependent territory are administered by the metropolitan power as part of its overall foreign policy. The conduct of relations with other sovereign states is one of the functions of a sovereign central government, and is always one of the powers reserved by an imperial authority even when partial self-government has been conceded to a subject people. The politics of a country under the control of another nation are essentially domestic, and "foreign" only insofar as they involve relations with the imperial authority. When, therefore, such a country achieves independence, it suddenly finds itself in a world of sovereign states with no body of trained diplomats or set of working principles of foreign policy such as old-established states evolve from long practice and experience of international relations.

In India there is no continuity between the diplomacy of the Indian kingdoms which existed before the supremacy of the British Raj and the foreign policy of the new nation which began in 1947. Everything has had to be improvised and worked out from the beginning; in this respect India could benefit far less from the British heritage than in the sphere of internal civil administration, for the Indian civil service was an organization adapted to Indian conditions, whereas the "External Affairs Department" of the Government of India could hardly be more than a branch of the Foreign Office in London. In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that Indian foreign policy in the first nine years of its existence should be characterized by a certain doctrinaire quality, an addiction to abstract principles not yet modified by experience and knowledge of the outer world.

THE somewhat callow idealism to be expected of a new state engaging in international diplomacy for the first time has, however, in the case of India been complicated by the influence of Gandhi and his faith on all the thinking and feeling of India's present leaders. Participation in the non-violent movement of resistance to British rule which Gandhi inspired and led was a great spiritual experience that has left its mark on all the Congress leaders of Nehru's generation.

In one of his talks with the French journalist Tibor Mende which have recently

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been published under the title of *Conversations with Mr. Nehru,* Nehru said in recollection of his own conversion by Gandhi:

> . . . I was simply bowled over by Gandhi, straight off. . . . It was a new revolutionary force in action. All this, of course, had an overpowering effect on us. We saw this great movement, were part of it, were swept by it and we pushed it ahead. At that time there were no doubts in our minds about its complete efficacy; the doubts arose later and we resolved or left them unresolved from time to time.

Looking back on the history of India's struggle for national independence, we can appreciate today how fortunate it was both for India and for Britain that it developed under the leadership of such a man as Gandhi, who evoked a self-sacrificing fervor which could never have been attained by a merely constitutional nationalist party and yet kept it within the bounds of peaceful, non-violent action. To him in the first place is due the credit for the fact that the final dissolution of the British Raj was achieved without a great armed insurrection.

But the particular course of events in India has certainly contributed to a certain unawareness in Indian public opinion of the more extreme realities of power politics in the contemporary world. Although many practitioners of non-violent non-cooperation went to jail—including, of course, Nehru himself—the fight was carried on by both sides according to certain rules; British political repression, harsh as it might seem to idealists striving for national liberation, was far removed from terror of the totalitarian type. The real test of Gandhi's political methods would have been in their application against Hitler or Stalin, and this was a test which they never had to meet. Consequently, there is a disposition among Indians whose minds have been formed by the experience of the Gandhi era to overestimate the effectiveness of purely moral force in all human affairs and to underestimate the ruthlessness and aggressiveness of totalitarian *Realpolitik* as it operates in our time. There is an assumption that men everywhere are really reasonable and humane, that all conflicts can in the end be resolved through discussion and persuasion, and that defensive military combinations are not the result, but the cause, of international strife—since the dangers against which they are supposed to provide are imaginary.

This is, of course, the attitude of so many Western liberals who, nurtured in an environment of legality, security, and constitutional order, are unable to comprehend the states of mind which breed, and are bred by, systems of unlimited violence and terror. A simple faith in the goodness of human nature is, no doubt, a noble trait and in a transcendental spiritual sense may even be justified, but in practical affairs a man who has always led a sheltered, respectable life is likely to be insufficiently wary if he suddenly finds himself in the company of gangsters and crooks—and this gullibility may involve not only his own interests, but also those of others, if he is acting as their agent or trustee. A man with such a background may be quick to recognize wrongdoing of a kind with which he is familiar, but will refuse to believe in far greater evil which surpasses his experience. Thus there have been plenty of normally well-informed political observers in our time who have been realistic enough about the ordinary crimes and follies of governments, but found it quite incredible that Hitler should deliberately put to death five million Jews, or Stalin secretly massacre all the officers captured in his invasion of Poland. The very enormity of totalitarian violence gives it an advantage before the bar of liberal-optimist opinion because it appears unreal.

A BASIC inability to comprehend the nature of Communist power is evident in Nehru's benevolently tolerant attitude toward Communist regimes in contrast to the severity of his criticisms of Western nations. Thus in one of his conversations with Mende he is recorded as saying:

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I do not like the techniques adopted by the Communist party. That again means I would not like to have it in my country. But who am I to say what—in a particular set of circumstances—another country does? I am not competent, and anyhow I cannot interfere. So I put up with it . . . my objecting to what they do necessarily would lead to their objecting to what I do. Now I do not want their interference and I do not wish to interfere with them, or with any other country for that matter.

This line of non-interference, even by criticism, in the affairs of the Communist world does not apply, however, to the colonial or semi-colonial regimes of Western powers. In this sphere India claims rights of interference over the whole area from New Guinea to Morocco. Continuing his conversation with Mende he declares:

I do not know if it is adequately realized in many Western countries or in America how strongly we feel on the question of colonialism. . . . This is a vital and important problem for us. Colonialism and racialism, these two things are vital in the Asian countries. And whatever our differences may be, we meet together, as in Bandung, and we are all at one in this. . . . We are interested therefore not only in the elimination of colonialism from Asian countries where it still exists but also from Africa.

Nehru does not, of course, exaggerate in emphasizing the strength of Asian feeling on the subject. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of his own anti-colonial conviction. But here again, why the double standard as between the Western nations and the Soviet Union? At Bandung India was conspicuously in the endeavor to keep any reference to Russian imperialism out of the proceedings of the conference. But why is the future of Algeria, Aden, or Iran the concern of all Asian and African nations, while that of Georgia, Azerbaijan, or Uzbekistan is deemed entirely an internal affair of the Soviet Union?

We know, indeed, that Communism maintains the fiction that the constituent national republics of the Soviet Union are voluntary members of a federation in which they have proportional representation at the center as well as their own elected state governments, and that there is in the Soviet Union no ground for any movement for separate national sovereignty such as there is in the empires of capitalist countries. But why should a man of Nehru's intelligence swallow all this without asking himself what freedom of choice the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union have ever had in the matter of their federation, and without considering the abundant evidence which exists with regard to the struggles of these peoples for national independence over the last forty years? Is Nehru not aware that in the mass deportations of the Chechens, Crimean Tatars, Kalmucks, and other recalcitrant peoples during the Stalin era the Soviet government dealt with nationalist resistance by methods more ruthless than have ever been used by the British, French, or Dutch in the annals of their colonial rule in Asia? But if he is aware of it, why does he continually give the world the impression that he endorses the Communist thesis that imperial domination is essentially an outcome of Western capitalist expansion and can never be attributed to a Communist state?

There is another case, too, affecting India more closely, which illustrates the double standard of Nehruite thinking. There is no people in the world which has more strongly marked characteristics as a distinct national entity than the Tibetans, nor one which has a more clearly defined territory. This people, moreover, has been independent of foreign control for most of its history and was independent *de facto* for four decades from 1912. Yet India, after first protesting against, finally acquiesced in the Chinese reconquest of Tibet, and has recently concluded with Peking a treaty which refers to "the Tibet region of China." There were no doubt weighty reasons for India to avoid incurring the enmity of China and involving Indian resources in support of a weak and backward buffer state. But if political realism thus leads India to connive at the subjugation of a formerly independent people on its own borders, what is left morally of the lofty idealism which so

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uncompromisingly upholds the rights of nationality in distant lands? If a "Tibet region" of China, why not an "Algeria region" of France, or a "Kenya region" of Britain? Or is the existence of an intervening sea the essential condition for classifying as imperialism the rule of one people over another?

IN TRYING to understand how Nehru's mind works in relation to these questions, one must return to the all-important fact of India's lack of a diplomatic tradition and concentration until a few years ago on the country's internal affairs and the struggle for independence from the British Raj. Suddenly confronted with the need to conduct a foreign policy in a world of extremely complex international relations, the Indian nationalist leaders looked around for information and advice, for a simple set of rules to enable them to interpret the bewildering phenomena of world affairs. They were naturally unwilling to be instructed by their British ex-rulers, for they suspected that the latter would try to give them a view of the world which it was convenient for British interests that they should have, and they were resolved to break away entirely from British tutelage. Herein lay the opportunity for crypto-Communists and fellow-travelers entering the new officialdom from the ranks of the intelligentsia to fill the vacuum and give shape to the thinking of minds which, familiar as they were with the internal problems of India, were lacking in knowledge and experience of the field of foreign affairs.

In this way Communism gained a subtle influence over the making of Indian foreign policy quite out of proportion to its importance as a factor in Indian internal politics. It offered a complete, ready-made, and clear-cut version of world affairs which seemed to explain in simple fashion the most baffling complexities of the world situation. And this could be done without undue emphasis on the Marxist-Leninist basis of the interpretation—in such a way that Communism and an anti-colonial nationalism with overtones of socialism appeared to be natural allies in a fight against forces of reaction and exploitation identified with the imperialist West.

Nehru has been extremely susceptible to indirect Communist influences reaching him through his entourage because to an even greater extent than most politicians in high office he relies for his knowledge of facts on briefing by his advisers. A hostile, but not entirely unfair Indian critic of Nehru has written of his leadership:

> He would never make a good judge, for he is in the habit of passing judgment in favor of whoever reaches his ear first. Loyalty and personal attachment count with him more than the facts of the case. . . . Those who know Nehru intimately as an administrator are of the opinion that he is not at home with matters of a concrete character, which unfortunately comprise seventy-five per cent of the whole range of governmental activity. He cannot come to grips with any issue which involves a proper study of data. . . . The enunciation of foreign policy, especially of our neutral brand, comes easily to him. It only needs sweeping generalities in which he specializes: the broad long-range view, the progressive eradication of mutual suspicions, the smoothing of differences, the blessings of peace, the amelioration of human suffering, neighborly feelings, bonds of friendship, the self-respect of the downtrodden [D. F. Karaka, in *Nehru, the Lotus Eater from Kashmir*].

These characteristics go far to explain why it is that, although Nehru is his own foreign minister, the making of Indian foreign policy appears to be left to a very large extent to Krishna Menon. A man cannot be an effective foreign minister unless he is willing to make a "proper study of data," and as Nehru is concurrently Prime Minister and chairman of the Indian Planning Commission, he is hardly able in any case to give more than a fraction of his time to foreign affairs. This gives great scope to the influence of a man who has always been regarded as a fellow-traveler, and who has distinguished himself in the United Nations by the frequency with which he has aligned India with the Soviet bloc in international controversies. Krishna Menon

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owes his position to Nehru's personal support, and he succeeds in imposing on his patron policies which are far more definitely conceived and ideologically slanted than Nehru's own.

An Egyptian newspaper not long ago displayed side by side photographs of Nasser, Nehru, and Chou En-lai, who were described in the caption as "the three great leaders of the Afro-Asian peoples against imperialism." It is doubtful whether Nehru would be entirely pleased at being included in a triptych with two such companions, but there is much in the Indian record to make it appropriate.

The course of Indian policy with regard to Korea showed a disposition to set good relations with Communist China above any consideration of the merits of the dispute. After voting for the original Security Council resolution condemning the North Korean attack on South Korea, India declined to participate in any enforcement of the United Nations decision, even with a token contingent—which would have deprived the United Nations intervention of the predominantly Western character which otherwise it inevitably had—and subsequently refused to join in designating Communist China an aggressor after the Chinese move against the United Nations forces. The emotional urge which led India to repudiate its original commitment to support of South Korea has been sufficiently well indicated by an Indian writer who entirely approves of the policy then pursued by the Indian government. Dr. K. Gupta, in his recently published book *Indian Foreign Policy in Defence of National Interest,* sums up the situation prevailing at the beginning of 1951 with the revealing sentence:

> Now that the new China under Mao Tse-tung's leadership was able to place herself in a position of military equality with the Great Powers of the world, by meeting with a crushing defeat MacArthur's offensive towards the Yalu, it was hailed all over Asia as a fitting reply to the humiliations suffered by the Asian peoples at the hands of the Western powers for the last few decades.

That the Korean people might have to be sacrificed and forcibly subjected to a political system which India's leaders would not accept in their own country was evidently considered unimportant in comparison with the satisfaction to be obtained from the spectacle of an expeditionary force mainly composed of Western troops being rolled back by Chinese arms.

Similarly, in the Middle East the defiance of Britain and France by the militant, rabble-rousing Pan-Arab nationalism of Colonel Nasser has so much engaged the anti-imperialist sympathies of India as to distract all attention from the fact that the central purpose of this nationalism is the destruction of an independent national state which is not the instrument of any imperial power, but represents a people settled in Asia and desiring to live its own life within frontiers which are the barest minimum possible for its existence. Nothing has been in such glaring contradiction to Nehru's constantly proclaimed principles of policy as the Indian attitude toward Israel. But in addition to sympathy for a movement with such obvious—though largely superficial—resemblance to India's own nationalism, there have been powerful diplomatic considerations operating to align India with Egyptian-led Pan-Arabism.

The strongest motive of India's Middle Eastern policy has been to counteract the prestige and influence which Pakistan, as a Moslem power established in the Indian sub-continent, naturally possesses throughout the Islamic world. India has been able to do this particularly by playing on the antagonism between Egypt and Iraq, and by taking advantage of the Egyptian opposition to the Baghdad Pact.

India opposes the Baghdad Pact because it conflicts with the principle of neutralism —which India apparently claims not only to adopt for herself, but also to impose on her neighbors; she also opposes the Pact because it perpetuates Western influence in Asia by including a Western power in an Asian regional alliance; and above all, she opposes the Pact because it strengthens Pakistan.

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Egypt detests the Pact primarily because it is the symbol of Iraq's rejection of Egyptian leadership of the Arab world. Further, since the Pact is a defensive alliance for resisting Soviet expansion in the Middle East, all Communist influences both in India and in the Arab countries are directed toward an incessant agitation against it. Thus India and Egypt have been drawn together in hostility to the Baghdad Pact countries; and, as a by-product of this, India takes Egypt's side against Israel.

In any case there has been a profound ignorance in India of the facts of the Palestine situation, if only because India has diplomatic relations with Arab countries, but not with Israel, so that until Sharett's recent visit to Delhi and Bombay, Arab propaganda had a clear field and the case for Israel went unheard. The Arab influences have been reinforced by those of Communist anti-Zionism, and "neutral" India is thus brought into line with the Soviet-Nasserite objective of crushing Israel by building a coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and equipped with Russian arms.

The Anglo-French action against Egypt following on the preventive invasion by Israel appears merely to have accentuated the Indian tendency to regard the Middle Eastern situation exclusively in terms of resistance to Western imperialism. At the time of writing it is still too early to say what will happen in Egypt as a result of recent events, but it seems quite likely that Nasser's position will be strengthened rather than weakened; if so, the Middle Eastern situation will tend to go from bad to worse, for a general war of the Arab states against Israel is the essential goal of Nasserism. It can only be prevented if the United States assumes a definite obligation to preserve Israel against attack within its existing frontiers. But if the American government should make up its mind to maintain the peace of the Middle East—instead of talking about its willingness to guarantee "agreed" frontiers, which is an incitement to war—then a very important part of the policy would have to be an effort to persuade India of the rightness of such a course, so that India's great weight in Asian affairs may be thrown in favor of, and not against, the intervention.

IN SPITE of all that has been said above about the bias of the leadership of Congress India in favor of the Soviet bloc and of anti-Western nationalist dictatorships of the Nasser type, it should be by no means a hopeless task for Western diplomacy and publicity—or rather American, since Britain is now in such extreme disfavor in Delhi on account of Eden's Egyptian adventure—to win Nehru himself and Indian educated opinion to a more just and balanced view of world affairs. When everything has been said on the other side, the fact remains that India is the great hope of democracy and liberal values in Asia, and that its political practice stands out in the strongest contrast both to the totalitarian regime of Communist China and to the more or less dictatorial governments of the Middle East.

Irritation at Indian foreign policy should not blind the West to the great virtues of Nehru's India—the combination of strong and stable administration with a genuine political liberty, the free elections, the independence of the judiciary, the active policies of economic development and social reform carried on without the coercion, the tyranny, and the persecutions supposed to be necessary for any transformation of Eastern societies. Nehru's basic devotion to liberal principles—in spite of a fiery temperament which is easily angered by any opposition—is brought out very clearly by the record of the conversations with Tibor Mende.

Mende, as his other writings reveal, is extremely sympathetic to Chinese Communism, and disposed to regard Nehru as insufficiently drastic in overcoming obstacles to social and economic progress in India. In one of his interviews with Nehru he suggested that there might be a middle way between "revolution, execution squads and commissars on the one hand and the classical British parliamentary democracy on the other." Nehru, however, declined to be

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drawn into a repudiation of democratic restraints, and while admitting that "the speed of change" might be slower in a democracy than under a dictatorship, expressed his opinion that "the difference in time is not so great as people imagine." Mende then returned to the attack and urged—with an obvious relevance to Nehru's own position—that if the "slow process of persuasion" were insufficient to bring about desirable reforms, it might be right for "some personality who by fortunate historical accident happened to be in a position to do it" to get things done by "the more direct utilization of one's influence." But Nehru still declined to recognize such a right of direct action, and argued that the task of such a personality was to "move the majority" and attain his ends "by the democratic processes of law."

In order to have a proper perspective on Indian affairs it is essential always to keep in mind this real democratic faith of Nehru and the greater part of the Congress leadership. This is something which cannot be taken for granted and, under Indian conditions, can only be maintained in the face of strong temptations to resort to dictatorial authority. It needs all the moral support and encouragement that the West can give if India is indeed to provide Asia with a convincing alternative to the Chinese example. The West must continually emphasize its common ground of belief and purpose with India and be prepared to give generous economic aid to India not on condition of any international diplomatic alignment, but as from one democratic nation to another in the fraternity of the free world.

India should also be given due credit for not having forcibly seized those residues of European imperialism in India, the Portuguese enclaves, though nothing would be easier for her than to do so; it is impossible to imagine Communist China or Egypt behaving with such forbearance in similar circumstances. But Nehru, after all, is not Chou En-lai; he is not Nasser. Ultimately he is not even Krishna Menon. He is a man open to reason and persuasion—and this applies generally to Indian educated opinion—if the right approach can be found, and due consideration given to the susceptibilities of a nation which has so recently emerged from Western tutelage.

The Western nations must take account of India in every major international decision, and they must take trouble to explain and justify their policies to India, with adequate supporting factual evidence, not only in moments of crisis, but all the time. Nothing is to be gained by ignoring the recent anti-Western bias of Indian policy or by minimizing its importance. But it is not a state of affairs that is beyond remedy, and statesmen both in Washington and in London should be taking thought how to make a better case for themselves in Delhi than they have succeeded in making over the last five years.

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HATE-MONGER WITH LITERARY TRIMMINGS

From Avant-Garde Poetry to Rear-Guard Politics

JAMES RORTY

SINCE the late Huey Long departed this world in a blaze of ambiguous gunfire, our professional rabble-rousers have been a singularly untalented lot. To call the roll is to summon a parade of faceless political pitchmen, most of whom are not even dowered with a first-class neurosis. Gerald L. K. Smith, Gerald Winrod, Joe McWilliams, Joe Kamp, Frank L. Britton, Conde McGinley, James Madole, Kenneth Goff, John Hamilton—there is scarcely a personality among them, nor can they often command more than a corporal's guard of loyal crackpots to follow them.

Can this judgment be safely extended to include Frederick John Kasper, the Cadmus of Clinton, Tennessee, Ezra Pound's disciple, and reportedly once a Negrophile habitué of New York's Greenwich Village?

One is not sure. Kasper's debut showed promise. Unquestionably, he sowed the dragon's teeth of racial hatred and fear in the sleepy little Anderson County seat of Clinton, which, if left alone, might have experienced no more trouble in desegregating its schools than did a score of other border state communities. It would seem, too, that Kasper did it almost single-handedly. The angry men and women who poured out of the Cumberland hills to demonstrate and riot before the Anderson County courthouse had failed signally to respond to previous attempts at agitation and incitement. It is significant, too, that while Kasper was in jail on a vagrancy charge the disorders subsided, only to boil over again when he was released and assumed command of the pickets besieging the Clinton High School.

Of what stuff, then, is this our Cadmus made? Have the combined influences of a middle-class New Jersey home,* a Southern military academy, Yankton College, Columbia University, and Ezra Pound shaped this self-avowed trouble-maker into an effective leader of Southern segregationist resistance and revolt?

John Kasper was a young man,
A young man were he
Tall and twenty-six he grew
In this "homeland of the free". . . .

My father's name is Truelove,
My mother's name was Agee,
No jew Supreme Court Justice
Gonna make my laws for me. . . .

John Kasper was a young man,
A young man were he
When he went to fight the battle
Of Clinton, Tennessee.

So runs the patently inauthentic folk-

JAMES RORTY appeared in COMMENTARY's first issue (November 1945) with a piece on three anti-Semitic demagogues, "American Fuehrer in Dress Rehearsal." He returned to this subject area with "The Native Anti-Semite's 'New Look'" (November 1954). Now he describes the latest in rabble-rousers. Mr. Rorty is the author (with Moshe Decter) of *McCarthy and the Communists* (1954). His most recent contributions to these pages include a series on desegregation—"Desegregation Along the Mason-Dixon Line" (December 1954), "Desegregation: Prince Edward County, Va." (May 1956), and "Virginia's Creeping Desegregation" (July 1956).

*At Columbia University, where most of Kasper's friends appear to have been Jews, Kasper sometimes talked of his early home life, describing his childhood as unhappy and distorted by frequent quarrels with his parents. He was forced to attend Sunday school against his will, one acquaintance reports him as saying, and he was withdrawn after he had made a great scandal by challenging the religious teachings of the Sunday school.

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ballad that was distributed in the lobby of the Clinton courtroom when Kasper's trial for sedition and inciting to riot opened the day before the national elections. Its subject—and possibly its author as well, unless it was composed by Kasper's former roommate, the talented if somewhat effete poet-economist Eustace Mullins—is a six-foot, slightly stooped, and faintly decadent-looking young man with a narrow forehead and a beaked profile. His *charisma,* such as it is, smolders damply out of deep-set blue eyes that never lost their hurt-spaniel look even when Kasper, his long-fingered white hands weaving dialectical arabesques in the air, was animatedly instructing the jury, the prosecution, and a gaping audience of Tennessee hill-billies in the Poundian doctrines of history, race, economics, and jurisprudence.

Does Kasper believe this nonsense? Is he sincere?

The question was much discussed by members of the jestingly named "Southern War Correspondents Association" who had come to Clinton during the riots and returned to cover the trial. The consensus was that while Kasper has certainly proved himself on and off the witness stand to be a cynical and unctuous pitchman, he is profoundly sincere in at least one respect: namely, his anti-Semitism. This judgment was confirmed in the writer's presence when I accompanied a Jewish colleague who approached Kasper outside the courtroom and tried to get him to confirm or deny the reports of his Negrophile past.

"I'm not talking during the trial," said Kasper. Then, his voice rising and his eyes signaling his hill-billy entourage, he snarled:

"And I'm certainly not talking to a *Jew!*"

THE biographical data concerning Kasper are scant, and most of it second-hand since neither the subject, his close relatives, nor his intimate friends have been very communicative to reporters. Frederick John Kasper was born in 1929 in the city of Camden, New Jersey. Both his parents were born and brought up in this country. His father, who died some years ago, was a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a moderately successful combustion engineer.

Kasper's schoolmates in Camden remember him as a quiet, retiring boy and a good if not brilliant student. During his mid-teens he was sent to the Riverside Military Academy in Georgia for two years, thence briefly to Temple University in Philadelphia, and from there to Yankton College in Yankton, South Dakota. His teachers at this small private college, whose history is associated with the native agrarian radicalism of the Populist period, were impressed with Kasper's intellectual gifts, but described him as a "trouble-maker with pronounced left-wing political sympathies."

After two years, Kasper transferred to Columbia's School of General Studies, his draft board having classified him 4-F. Kasper majored in philosophy, with a minor in English literature, and was graduated in 1951. Although his grades were average to good, Columbia seems to have been less impressed by Kasper's intellectual gifts than was Yankton. There are no reports of his engaging in any political activities on the campus, although he is said to have described himself on one occasion as an "intellectual fascist."

The only one of his teachers who remembers him is the poet Babette Deutsch (a contributor to COMMENTARY), who conducts a course in "Twentieth Century Poetry" in Columbia's School of General Studies. Miss Deutsch recalls that in her treatment of Ezra Pound she said that his poetry must be respected, however much one might abhor his politics. In the classroom discussion that followed, Kasper declared that he, on the contrary, found little to interest him in Pound's poetry, but was greatly impressed by his politics. There ensued a verbal free-for-all between Kasper and members of the class, all of whom were outraged.

Subsequently Kasper sent Miss Deutsch an apologetic note, appended to a term paper, thanking her for bringing him to an understanding of the dangers of fascism and

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Stalinism alike, and to a sense of humane values. Still later, after he had been graduated from General Studies and had begun to issue his "Square $ Series" of reprints and translations, Kasper visited his former teacher on two occasions and asked that his paper-bound edition of Pound's translation of the Analects of Confucius be adopted for use in her classes, but nothing came of this proposal. Miss Deutsch adds that, while she has had a good many neurotic young men and women in her classes, she did not consider Kasper to be one of them.

In 1952 or thereabouts, Kasper became associated with Florette Henry, an intelligent and attractive Negro woman in her twenties, in the "Make-It-New" bookshop (named after the title of one of Pound's books) at 168 Bleecker Street in New York's Greenwich Village. About the same time, Kasper became the publisher, with David Horton, of the aforementioned "Square $ Series" which included two of Pound's translations, *The Unwobbling Pivot and the Great Digest of Confucius* and *Confucian Analects*. Other items in this series were Thomas H. Benton's *Bank of the United States,* Alexander Del Mar's *Barbara Villiers or a History of Monetary Crimes,* and Eustace Mullins's *The Federal Reserve Conspiracy*. According to Mr. Mullins, who is an ardent admirer of Pound, "the nation's banking reserves were placed in the hands of the Jewish international bankers for the purpose of carrying out their nearly fulfilled world dictatorship plan."*

In addition to selling this and similar literary merchandise, the "Make-It-New" bookshop issued a catalogue of recommended reading which included the spurious "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," Hitler's *Mein Kampf,* and John O. Beaty's virulently anti-Semitic *The Iron Curtain over America*. It also took orders for subscriptions to such anti-Semitic periodicals as Conde McGinley's *Common Sense,* Frank L. Britton's *American Nationalist,* and Robert H. Williams's *Williams' Intelligence Summary*.

It would appear that Kasper established personal contact with Ezra Pound shortly after his graduation from Columbia in 1951. At Pound's suggestion, two members of the Pound literary circle in Washington picked up Kasper in New York and drove him to Washington, where he visited the poet in St. Elizabeth's Hospital. (En route to Washington, Kasper astonished and repelled his hosts by his obsessed political diatribes and unrestrained, incoherent ranting.) Thereafter, Kasper maintained frequent contact with Pound, up to and even after his involvement in the Clinton affair had gained him national notoriety.

During Kasper's New York period there was little to distinguish him from a dozen other obscure anti-Semitic hate-peddlers except his somewhat more inflated intellectual and literary pretensions, which derived largely from his Poundian discipleship. At that time he was not anti-Negro.

PRIOR to the spring of 1956, when his *Virginians Awake!* pamphlet was issued, he had apparently made no contributions whatever to segregationist literature. On the contrary, his "Make-It-New" bookshop was a recognized center for the distribution of pro-Negro books and magazines and was patronized chiefly by Negroes and Negrophile whites, including some students from the Communist party's Jefferson School.

During this period, in fact, most of Kasper's friends and associates would appear to have been Negroes. Florette Henry was his associate and assistant in the conduct of the bookshop. Ted Joans, the Negro artist, and Ned Williams, the choreographer, were both intimate friends, or so considered themselves. At one time, according to Joans, Kasper helped him and his white wife to obtain an apartment. Joans remembers a fish fry in Brooklyn at which Kasper jumped on a table, urged all present to join the NAACP, and recruited twelve new members on the spot. But he himself did not join, "because of the Jew"—meaning pre-

*Mullins was briefly employed by the Library of Congress; his employment was terminated because of his bigoted activities.

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sumably because of the support given to the NAACP by Jews—so Joans remembers Kasper telling the dismayed gathering.

When asked to comment on these and other statements by former Negro friends in the Village, Kasper has insisted that he was interested only in exploring the cultural roots of his Negro acquaintances; that he encouraged them to become interested in their own race, and to stop imitating the whites; that he tried vainly to induce one of his Negro acquaintances to translate the work of the late Leo Frobenius, the German archaeologist and anthropologist (quoted in Pound's *Cantos*) whose unflattering estimate of Negro potentialities is in accord with the Poundian philosophy of race which Kasper now espouses.

Joans, Williams, and other Negroes interviewed by George Barner of the *Amsterdam News* are unable to recall any such expressions of interest in their culture by their one-time friend and companion. What they do remember is that in the discussions of race-relations problems which occurred frequently at the Sunday night gatherings in the bookshop, Kasper invariably took the side of the Negro and expressed his disgust with the ill treatment they were receiving in the South. Joans quotes him as saying on one occasion: "If I were a strong Negro, I would lead a march on Washington. If I were a Negro, I would holler in front of the United Nations building until somebody noticed me. If I were you, I'd take one of my paintings and hang it on the Museum of Modern Art. All they could do would be to jail and fine you. And think of all the publicity you'd get."

Kasper is said to have declared that, as for himself, he was prepared to go to any extreme to make his name known to history, and was convinced that sooner or later his chance would come.

After he left New York Kasper made an unsuccessful attempt to associate himself with Black Mountain College in North Carolina. Afterward, Kasper claimed, he served briefly as campaign manager for Rear Admiral John G. Crommelin during the latter's unsuccessful bid for John Sparkman's seat in the United States Senate. In 1949 Admiral Crommelin was suspended from duty for revealing information bearing on the then pending unification of the armed forces. Subsequently he joined the group who organized the Madison Square Garden rally of Ten Million Americans Mobilizing for Justice to Senator Joseph McCarthy, in November of 1954. In Admiral Crommelin's speech on that occasion there were dark references to "the hidden force in our government" which, he declared, had decreed the political liquidation of the Senator from Wisconsin. A native Alabaman and ardent segregationist, Admiral Crommelin loyally visited Kasper in jail during his incarceration for violating the Court's order that he stop interfering with the desegregation of the Clinton High School, and was a character witness at his trial.

In the spring of 1956, apparently, Kasper decided that destiny was beckoning and that he must answer her summons, even if it involved betraying the Negro friends with whom he had shared his dreams and ambitions. A few months before, he had moved his book business to Washington, where it became the Cadmus Bookshop, at 1246 Wisconsin Avenue. His devoted Negro assistant, Florette Henry, whom he had introduced to Pound on one occasion, remained behind in New York. In her place he had acquired a new associate, Mrs. Nora Devereaux, formerly a bookseller in New York.

In Washington, Kasper continued to visit Pound at St. Elizabeth's, although there are unconfirmed rumors that at about this time they had a violent quarrel. However, the Pound influence continues to be apparent in the pamphlet *Virginians Awake!* with which Kasper made his debut as a segregationist publicist and organizer. It was first released at a Washington press conference, following Kasper's announcement, in June of this year, that he had launched the Seaboard White Citizens Council, affiliated with the radical secedent wing of the Alabama WCC headed by Ace Carter.

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Newsmen were amazed and baffled by the wild incendiarism and seemingly contrived illiteracy of this weird opus, which declaims:

Jail the NAACP! Hang the Supreme Court
Swine! Destroy the Reds! Save the White!
Now damn all race-mixers . . . the stink:
Roose, Harry & Ike
God bless Jeff/Jax & John Adams, also Abe.
Loathe carpetbag, despise
scalawag. Hate mongrelizers. (pink punks,
flat-chested high-brows,
homos, perverts, freaks, golf-players, poodle
dogs, hot-eyed Socialists
Fabians, scum, mould on top of the omelette,
Myerization of News,
liars for hire; the press-gang, degenerate
liberals crying for
petrefaction of putrefaction,* complaining
s—— used to be blacker and richer,† Social
democrats, new dealers,
Said Ben: Better keep 'em out or yr/grand
children will miss you. . . .‡

Also:

Death for Usurers, money monopolists, obstructors of Distribution (international finance, World Bank and Bunk, Unesco currency, Federal Reserve racket, Barney Baruch's check book, Schiff and Warburg finance Bolshevik refolooshun 1917, Lehman finances Newhouse $$ Birmingham News).

Most readers, not to speak of the Tennessee hill-billies and Alabama red-necks who presumably are being addressed, are likely to be baffled by these exhortations, which appear on what Kasper laughingly refers to as "the literary cover" of his pamphlet; they require almost as much elucidation as one of Pound's later Cantos.

As a matter of fact, the language, the references, and even the abbreviations and the orthography obviously derive from Ezra Pound. The writer purchased a copy of the most recent installment of Pound's Cantos, *Section: Rock-Drill*** (Cantos 89-95) from Mrs. Devereaux, Kasper's loyal friend and associate in the management of the Cadmus Bookshop. The lady proved to be a devout *avant-garde* illuminate, who insisted that she found Pound's last Cantos not only admirable but even intelligible. When I confessed my own relative inadequacy, she suggested that I might acquire needed enlightenment by visiting Mr. Pound at St. Elizabeth's hospital, with the chance that at the same time I might meet Kasper, who planned to visit the master on his return from an organizing trip in the South. (Pound regretted his inability to see me and subsequently has been inaccessible to journalists in general.)

The first use of the *Virginians Awake!* pamphlet was to implement Kasper's rabble-rousing efforts in Charlottesville, Virginia, during the first weeks of August. Apparently he drove almost directly from Charlottesville to Clinton, arriving in the early morning hours of Saturday, August 25, and sleeping in his car. That afternoon and evening he went from house to house urging people to resist the admission of Negroes to the Clinton High School, which had been ordered to begin desegregation the following Monday when school opened. The subsequent action of the Clinton drama was detailed by witnesses at Kasper's trial for sedition and incitement to riot, which began in the Clinton Court House on November 5 and ended on November 20, when an all-male jury that included four self-avowed segregationists found him not guilty on both counts of the indictment.

Clinton has 3,712 inhabitants according to the last census. It is seventeen miles north

*See Canto XV: "and the fabians crying for the petrification of putrefaction" (*The Cantos of Ezra Pound*, New Directions, 1948).

†*Ibid.*; "claiming that the sh-t used to be blacker and richer."

‡See Canto LII: "Remarked Ben: better keep out the jews or yr/grand children will curse you." Pound's source here clearly seems to be an anti-Semitic document circulated in this country during the 30's by Nazi propagandists which purported to be a copy of a speech attacking the Jews made by Benjamin Franklin during the Constitutional Convention of 1787. The speech was allegedly contained in the "private diary" of Charles Pinckney of South Carolina, a fellow delegate to the Convention. But no such "diary" exists, nor have historians been able to find any record of it. Furthermore, historians doubt that the language and phrasing of the speech could be of Colonial origin. In short, they have branded the document a fake. (See *The Institute News*, published by the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, Pa., Vol. III, No. 4, August 1938, pages 1-2.)

**New Directions, 1956.

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of Knoxville, midway between the atomic center of Oak Ridge and TVA's model town of Norris. The drab little town has a central square dominated by its big, ugly pre-Civil War courthouse; a two-story brick hotel of the same vintage that is famous for serving the best Southern cooking obtainable north of McMinnville; three handsome modern churches; an avenue of prosperous middle-class homes; a small Negro settlement of some fifty homemade shacks and cottages clinging to the slopes of Foley Hill, which rises steeply in back of the modern new high school.

Most of the eight hundred children enrolled in the Clinton High School are brought in by bus from the surrounding countryside; from the dingy mine villages and the little hard-scrabble farms perched above the coves and inlets of TVA's many-fingered Norris Lake, which flooded much of Anderson County's best farmland. Their parents are poor people. They have been poor for at least six generations, ever since their pioneer Scotch-Irish, Huguenot, and German ancestors followed Daniel Boone through the Cumberland Gap, but stayed behind when Boone and his hardier companions pressed on north into the "Indian pasture" of the rich Kentucky Basin.

Poverty, isolation, inbreeding, ignorance, the cumulative effects of their traditional cornpone and fatback diet—all are reflected in their gaunt faces, their toothless gums, their gnarled and stunted bodies. These are the people whom John Kasper, tall, twenty-six, educated, and talking a marvelously impressive hodge-podge of Blackstone, Douglas, Frobenius, Ezra Pound, and Joe Kamp, came to save from the ignominy and mongrelization being engineered for them by those nine unhanged Supreme Court swine in collusion with the NAACP, the Jews, and the Communists.

Clinton's school authorities, as they now ruefully acknowledge, forgot about these people when, in the spring of 1956, they set about preparing the high school children and their parents for the enrollment in September of a dozen Negro students. Everybody agrees that Principal D. J. Brittain, Jr., and the school board did a good and careful job with the PTA and the service clubs, and with the congregations of most of the churches. But they forgot the Pilgrim Holiness sect, better known as the Holy Rollers. They forgot about the fundamentalist Baptist lay preachers—over two hundred of them in Anderson County alone—who on Sunday brush the straw from their coats and wash the coal dust from their faces and preach a millennial fire-and-brimstone gospel from the pulpits of the little mountain churches and store-front meeting houses. In short, they forgot about the people who might have been expected to give them the most trouble, and did.

ALL the best people of the town were persuaded that since every possible means of legal resistance to desegregation had been tried in vain, they had best relax and obey the law, if without enjoyment. Hence when John Kasper knocked at their doors that Saturday afternoon and evening and urged them to picket the schools with him, they sent him packing and alerted the town authorities. The next day, when he went to the office of the Clinton *Courier-News* to buy cardboard for his picket signs, he was met by an improvised committee of good citizens who urged him to get out of town. When he refused, they had him jailed for vagrancy.

Not, however, before Kasper had seen the other people, the poor people of Anderson County, who have been left with so little else with which to nourish their pride that their membership in the master race has become their most precious possession.

Not before Kasper had stood on the steps of the courthouse and addressed a crowd of several hundred of these people, telling them that they didn't have to let the "niggers" into their school (Kasper has difficulty in remembering to say "nigger" or "nigra" and betrayed his earlier training by frequent lapses on the stand). Not before Kasper had lit the fuse that set off a train of subsequent explosions.

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Just what Kasper actually said and did that Saturday night and during subsequent appearances on the picket line in front of the high school and on the courthouse steps was the chief subject of debate during the trial. J. Benjamin Simmons, Kasper's shrewd counsel, was helped by frequent restrictive rulings of the court which prevented the admission of evidence connecting Kasper directly with the riots.

While Kasper was in the Clinton jail, from Sunday afternoon until the following Tuesday noon, when he was released for lack of evidence, a few dozen leaderless men and women, with some teen-age truants, milled about the entrance to the school, waving placards proclaiming "We won't go to School with Niggers" and distributing a flyer adorned with a photograph that purported to show French prostitutes kissing Negro GI's. The accompanying text declared, over the imprint of the Seaboard White Citizens Council: "We are an action program. We proclaim action as our creed. We are fighting. You must fight with us." Yet the prosecution was not permitted to connect Kasper directly with the authorship of this inflammatory document.

The school opened with comparatively few absentees and the next morning, with Kasper still in jail and the picketing still spotty and non-violent, the attendance rose from 776 to 803, with classes crowded to overflowing. Tuesday noon Kasper was released from jail. Immediately he assumed leadership of the picket lines and spoke to a large crowd assembled on the school ground. That evening he harangued a rally in front of the courthouse. The next morning he reinforced his picket lines with fifty stay-away students and non-student teen-agers, and sent ten automobiles—three of them with Michigan licenses—circling through the streets of Clinton with their horns blowing.

By this time the town was in the incipient stages of what promised to become a first-class race riot. In the deserted streets of Foley Hill above the school the Negroes posted guards to warn of approaching raiders, while their wives and children huddled in cellars and attics. Many loaded their families into their cars and fled to relatives in other towns. Frightened teen-agers begged their parents not to send them again through the ever more menacing gauntlet of the picket lines. In the town, Bobby Kane, a Negro student, was chased by a mob of fifty teen-agers and adults. The police failed to intervene before he had been cornered, kicked, and beaten by a former white student named John Garter.

Three Negro students were rescued from the mob by the Clinton football team and returned to the sanctuary of the principal's office. Two other Negro students and a Negro woman who had defended herself with a knife were chased by the mob.

At another rally that evening, Kasper declared himself to be pleased with the results of his efforts. He would remain in town, he said, until the Negroes were removed from the school.

Knowing that they were working against time, a group of responsible citizens including Mayor W. E. Lewallen, Horace Wells, the newspaper editor, and Leo Grant, Jr., an Oak Ridge attorney and one-time paratrooper in the Korean war, debated what could be done so that peace might be restored to the boiling community. Wednesday night they urged Federal Judge Robert L. Taylor in Knoxville to issue an order enjoining Kasper, five of his named collaborators, and "all other persons who are acting or may act in concert with them," from further interference with the carrying out of the integration order that Judge Taylor had signed eight months previously.

Meanwhile the Mayor asked the state authorities in Nashville to alert the Tennessee Highway Patrol and ready a unit of the National Guard. Nobody doubted that they would be needed, for by this time Kasper had accomplished his purpose. The dragon's teeth he had helped to sow far and wide in the community that had so hoped for peace were sprouting up everywhere; in streets of the town, in the shouting picket

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lines that continued to picket the high school, and in the surrounding towns and villages, where the Negroes were beginning to arm themselves, stay away from work, and darken their homes at night.

Again John Kasper went to jail, this time for contempt of court, but promptly another equally dangerous Cadmus arrived in town. On Friday night Kasper's friend and ally, Asa (Ace) Carter, the former Birmingham radio announcer who had led his faction of violent activists out of the more conservative Alabama White Citizens Councils, addressed a gathering of at least fifteen hundred people in front of the courthouse. Before he was through the mob had wrecked practically every passing car bearing Negro passengers. Men, women, and teen-agers linked arms and marched up and down shouting "We want Kasper!" At one point a mob numbering at least two hundred people started up Main Street toward the home of Mayor Lewallen. When police cars blocked the highway, they turned back, but continued milling around town for the remainder of the night, shouting at passing cars and shooting off firecrackers.

Clinton has a police force of seven. It had proven itself quite unable to control the Friday night mob, and there was every reason to expect worse trouble Saturday night. The Governor had promised help, but thus far none had appeared.

In desperation, the Mayor and the Common Council called in Leo Grant, Jr., and asked him to recruit an emergency posse of citizens. Saturday morning, Grant swore in forty-seven deputies. They armed themselves with anything they could get, from German burp guns to ancient fowling pieces and single-shot target rifles. At the last moment, Grant managed to obtain a couple of machine guns and six tear-gas grenades from the Mayor of Knoxville.

As the afternoon wore on and the ugly mood of the gathering crowds became manifest, Grant contemplated his meager army with a sinking heart. To make an adequate show of force it should have been twice as big, and armed in such a way as not to excite the ridicule of the populace. Shouts of "Let's get the nigger lovers!" "Kill them!" and "Take their guns!" greeted the appearance of the posse in the square. Over three thousand people were jammed into the area around the courthouse. For a while the police, each officer surrounded by a squad of Grant's deputies, were able to keep the crowd moving. Then, at about 8 o'clock, a mob of six hundred jeering, yelling adults and teen-agers solidified on the east side of the square.

The final scene could not have been better timed if Hollywood had produced it. As the posse slowly advanced in line of skirmish and Grant bowled a tear-gas bomb at the feet of the mob, the howl of the Highway Patrol's sirens was heard and a score of police cars drove into the square. A half dozen arrests were made, after which the crowd became orderly and listened until midnight to speeches by orators representing the Tennessee Federation for Constitutional Government and other segregationist organizations. The next day, Sunday, saw the National Guard bivouacked in the square and Clinton's ordeal was over for the time being.

PARTLY because of the persistent objections of defense counsel, most of which were sustained by the court, the jury was given no sequential account of the riots that Kasper was accused of inciting. Much important evidence was excluded by Judge Hutson's ruling that Kasper could not be considered responsible for disorders occurring while he was in jail in Clinton and Knoxville. Kasper denied authorship or approval of some incendiary racist literature distributed in Clinton both during the riots and subsequently, although it bore the imprint of the Seaboard White Citizens Council of which he is executive secretary. He also denied using the inflammatory language attributed to him by peace officers who had heard his speeches on the picket lines and at rallies of his followers.

By way of showing that not only the effect but also the intent of Kasper's activi-

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ties was to incite disorder and violence, Detective Harold Fincher of the Birmingham police force was permitted, over the frantic objections of defense counsel, to testify that Kasper had said in the Central Park Theater of Birmingham on September 13, two weeks after the Clinton riots:

"The people of Clinton needed a leader. I'm a rabble-rouser, a trouble-maker. I'm not through up there. We want trouble. We want it now. We need lots of rabble-rousers. Some of us may die and I may die too. It may mean going back to jail, but I'm going back to fight. We went as far as we could have gone legally. Now is the time to fight, even if it involves bloodshed."

Fincher's hand-written notes were submitted to the jury for examination and returned to the judge, who handed them to the defense attorney. At this point they disappeared; and no stenographic transcript of the trial proceedings was taken.

The trial had other equally inexplicable aspects. At least one radio broadcaster took tape records of some of Kasper's most inflammatory speeches, but no attempt was made to introduce this evidence into the record. Attorney General John Lee West saw the cover of *Virginians Awake!* for the first time when this writer provided the prosecution with a photostat of the incendiary document, a copy of which was apparently available during the week of the riots to anybody in the Knoxville-Clinton area who chose to write for it to the Seaboard White Citizens Council, as did a local radio reporter.

D. J. Brittain, Jr., the gentle, scholarly high school principal who endured the concentrated fury of Kasper's "action program," was permitted to testify that Kasper had threatened in the presence of his picketers: "I will get the niggers out of the schools or you out." But he was prevented by the objections of the defense and the rulings of the judge from describing the incredible ordeal to which he was subjected without let-up during the riot week and long afterward: the continuous midnight ringing of his telephone, the ugly voices out of the night snarling foul insults and threats whenever he lifted the receiver; the fiery crosses burned in front of his house; the boycott by active segregationists of any tradesman courageous enough to continue dealing with Brittain; the whispering campaign broadcasting rumors that bombs had been planted under the school—it so terrified parents that the week after the riots attendance at the high school dropped to around two hundred, less than a third of normal.

THE children are back now, including all but one of the twelve Negroes who were enrolled when school started. One of the latter, the gifted Jo Ann Allen, was elected vice president of a school society. During the troubles only a handful of children joined the picketers and it was the children who rallied to the defense of their principal when the superintendent and the school board seemed likely to let him down. Practically all of them, along with many of their parents, signed a petition that Brittain be retained, offsetting another petition for his dismissal that had been circulated by the Anderson County White Citizens Council. Undoubtedly many of the signers of that petition were in the packed courtroom when Brittain, worn thin and haggard by weeks of harassment, mounted the witness stand.

Had he felt frightened and intimidated—asked Assistant Attorney General Fischer—when Kasper called him out of his office and demanded that he "get the niggers out or resign"? There were muffled guffaws from the audience, quickly suppressed as the judge gaveled for order.

Brittain winced, then glared back at the smirking faces of his persecutors. Some of them he had reason to know. Others he knew only through their voices, the voices that had given him so many weeks of sleepless nights, snarling curses, and threats until he discontinued his telephone, moved to a new address, and virtually went into hiding when not at the school.

They are not through with him, nor is Kasper, who announced, following his acquittal, that he planned soon to establish

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headquarters for the Tennessee White Citizens Council in the Clinton area and launch an intensive drive to undo what had been started there, by blocking all further efforts to implement the Supreme Court's desegregation order.

When the jury announced its verdict, after less than an hour's deliberation and only two ballots, close to three hundred people rose to their feet, yelling, screaming, and stomping. Kasper grinned, bowed, and pumped the hands of his admirers.

The Fates had by no means overtaken Cadmus yet. But Kasper had achieved his goal: trouble and notoriety. It was a question whether he could achieve anything more.

WHY DO YOU COME FROM, BABY DEAR

GERALD WEALES

THE whole world's gone fertile with a vengeance.
Each morning's mail brings news of a baby born.

I change no diapers, nor walk in morning
Hours to still a child. I stand outside
(Real nose to proverbial window)
And hear the pink-edged message (maybe blue-
Baby blue) tapped out on my mailbox floor.

I know them all, the mothers and the fathers.
And know it's hard to know them mothers, fathers.
One took *Ulysses* in a barracks bag
To a non-Trojan war. Another files
In triplicate all things—except his son.
And one more, who went to South America
In search of truth or shrunken heads, fathered
On a girl, who once believed in wheat germ
And took a Marxist basket-weaving course,
Twins. Mark two for the Yea-sayers.

Once it was said of our generation
That, if not lost, it was at least mislaid.
Midcentury optics has ruled glasses
Obsolete in rose. Yet from where I stand,
Some of us have gone to the future's source.

Here's the atom's answer. Here's affirmation.
In an age of contraception, here's hope.

GERALD WEALES, whose criticism is already known to our readers, here appears for the first time in our pages with a poem.

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ERICH FROMM'S MIDRASH ON LOVE

The Sacred and the Secular Forms

JAKOB J. PETUCHOWSKI

THERE is a sense in which Erich Fromm's new book, *The Art of Loving,* might be said to represent a 20th-century *midrash*—particularly on the early chapters of Genesis. This impression is created not only by several quotations from the Bible, but also by the many echoes from Biblical and rabbinic sources one seems to discern in the book.

When we call the book a modern midrash, we are fully aware of what the function of midrash has always been: to blend new insights with ancient wisdom, to infuse old myths with modern interpretations, and—since midrash is, after all, the homiletical branch of our literature—to *preach.* Fromm's book qualifies on all three counts—though Fromm the preacher falls behind Fromm the analyst and Fromm the creative thinker. But then, this judgment may be entirely subjective. In this era of Hollywood sentimentality, our ears are not easily accustomed to hearing Love preached in such an "unromantic," clinical, and perfectly antiseptic manner. Besides, Fromm himself makes it quite clear that he does not want to preach. (The professional preacher among his readers, however, may quite legitimately feel that Fromm's love does not extend to the preaching profession, when he can make such a clear-cut distinction—as on page 133—between "preaching" and "speaking of the ultimate and real need in every human being.")

Genesis 2:18 reads: "Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone. . . .'" Love, Fromm explains, is the answer to the problem of human existence; and that problem is man's awareness of his "separateness." Cut off from the harmonious state of nature, and yet being essentially a part of nature, man experiences loneliness, and that loneliness arouses anxiety. When Genesis also tells us, in Chapter 3, that Adam and Eve "knew that they were naked," and that they were ashamed, we ought not think that prudery was at issue. Fromm interprets the point of this story as follows: "After man and woman have become aware of themselves and of each other, they are aware of their separateness, and of their difference, inasmuch as they belong to different sexes. But while recognizing their separateness they remain strangers, because they have not yet learned to love each other. . . ."

Genesis 4:1 gives us the next text: "Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain. . . ." The Hebrew verb *yada,* translated here as "knew," in addition to its sexual connotation means most of the other things which Fromm deems basic to all true forms of love: "care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge." With this, we reach the heart of Fromm's view of love, which is a complicated one, and it certainly bears little resemblance to what most people today think love is. For one thing, "love is an activity, not a passive affect; it is a 'standing in,' not a 'falling for.'" It is primarily giving rather than receiving.

But if Fromm's concept of love has little in common with what the man in the street understands by that term, it is also signifi-

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ERICH FROMM'S *The Art of Loving* (Harper, 133 pp., $2.75) is a psychoanalyst's view of love, but JAKOB J. PETUCHOWSKI here finds it also a profoundly Jewish book. Rabbi Petuchowski is now assisant professor of Rabbinics at Hebrew Union College. His review of *Justice and Judaism* appeared in our issue of last August, and his articles "The Jewish Mission to the Nations" (October 1955) and "The Pharisaic Tradition Today" (February 1956) both attracted wide attention.

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cantly different from the notions of it held by Freud. For Freud, love was a by-product of sexual gratification. According to Fromm, sexual gratification comes as a result of love rather than vice versa—so that we might as well put our Havelock Ellis and our Van de Velde back on the shelf until we have straightened out our personal relations. And after that, chances are that we shall not need Ellis and Van de Velde. Yet, as we shall see, these manuals of sexual "technique" do have their place in the history of love; but only when love degenerates, as seems to be the case in contemporary Western society.

The ancient rabbis distinguished between two types of love: "the love which depends on some thing," and "the love which does not depend on some thing" (*Avot* 5:19). To the latter they ascribed permanence, whereas the former was doomed to frustration. As an example of "the love which depends on some thing" they mention Amnon's infatuation with Tamar (II Samuel, Chapter 13, whose verses 14 and 15 form a perfect illustration of Fromm's point about the illusory character of mere sexual attraction, which after satisfaction has been obtained may actually turn into hate). "The love which does not depend on some thing" is exemplified by the love of David and Jonathan.

The approach which finds expression in this rabbinic characterization could have come straight out of Fromm—although he knows of further and subtler subdivisions of love, and would hardly dignify the "love which depends on some thing" with the name of love. He aptly summarizes the difference between mature and immature love when he makes the latter exclaim: "I love because I am loved," whereas the former says: "I am loved because I love." And again, immature love says: "I love you because I need you," while mature love says: "I need you because I love you."

Our first experience of love is, of course, that between parent and child; and Fromm indicates in telling descriptions how a mother's love and a father's love are quite different things. A mother's love is unconditional. She loves her infant because it is hers, not because it lives up to any particular expectation. But the father's love has to be *deserved*. The father, figure of authority, sets standards that the child has to meet if he wants love. And this is just how it should be. For the infant needs his mother's unconditional love and care physiologically as well as psychologically, but the child, after six, begins to need his father's love too, his authority and guidance. Again, we have a nexus here between Fromm's psychology and earlier forms of midrash, as becomes apparent when we read the evaluation of the fatherly and motherly roles in the *mekilta* on Exodus 20:12.

But it is in this context that Fromm offers us a striking example of highly original midrash. The Promised Land, he reminds us, is always described as "flowing with milk and honey." Now the earth, as is well known, is always a mother symbol. We may, therefore, transfer the attributes of the earth to the mother herself. "Milk is the symbol of the first aspect of love, that of care and affirmation. Honey symbolizes the sweetness of life, the love for it, and the happiness in being alive. Most mothers are capable of giving 'milk,' but only a minority of giving 'honey' too. . . . One can distinguish indeed among children—and adults—those who got only 'milk' and those who got 'milk and honey.'"

Eventually, the mature person becomes his own mother and his own father. This—and here Fromm again differs with Freud—is not a case of actually "incorporating" mother and father, but of building "a motherly conscience on his own capacity for love, and a fatherly conscience on his reason and judgment."

Brotherly Love, however, is the kind which underlies all types of love. It is characterized by its very lack of exclusiveness. While, indeed, it is a "love between equals," and it is true that, even as equals, we are not always "equal" (fate plays tricks on us, and we may find ourselves in need of help), such inequality is merely transitory; we all

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have in common the permanent ability to stand and walk on our own feet. Yet, in the unfolding of true brotherly love, the helpless ones—the poor and the stranger—have an important part to play. The love of one's own flesh and blood is no achievement. That kind of love is found even in the animal kingdom. "Only in the love of those who do not serve a purpose, love begins to unfold." Here again Fromm echoes the Old Testament, which makes the central objects of man's love the pauper, the stranger, the widow and the orphan, and, eventually, the national enemy, the Egyptian and the Edomite.

Then there is Erotic Love. This is the craving for complete fusion, for union with another human being. But it is not identical with what the man in the street calls "falling in love," which is often merely a case of "egotism *à deux*," of two people identifying themselves with each other and trying to solve the problem of separation by aggrandizing the single individual into two. Such union is merely an illusion, for in order truly to love one person, one must love all persons, the world, and life itself.

And then we come to the problem of Self-Love. Fromm disagrees with both Calvin, for whom self-love is "a pest," and Freud, who identifies it with narcissism. On the contrary, Fromm shows that "if an individual is able to love productively, he loves himself too; if he can love *only* others, he cannot love at all." Moreover, self-love and selfishness, far from being identical, are actually opposites. The Bible itself implies the necessity of self-love with its command to "love thy neighbor *as thyself*." (There are important ramifications of this concept in rabbinic literature, which definitely point up a difference between Judaism and Christianity in this respect, and which we would like to see dealt with by Fromm in the future.)

Finally Fromm comes to speak of the love of God, which, psychologically speaking, is not different from the other forms of love thus far discussed. It, too, springs from the need to overcome separateness and achieve union. But since "God" stands for the highest value, the most desirable good of which a person can conceive, it follows that "the understanding of the concept of God must . . . start with an analysis of the character structure of the person who worships God." Here, Fromm arrives at what is probably the most controversial part of his book, one which, if we were to take him at his word, would have to be preceded by an analysis of his, Fromm's, own character structure in order to be understood.

A MIDRASH is not only concerned with blending new insights and ancient wisdom. To serve a purpose, it must also contain *musar* (ethical teaching) and *tochachot* (criticism and reproof). These abound in Fromm's book. Our contemporary society is taken to task precisely because it deprives us of the basic prerequisites of the unfolding of true love.

In our contemporary Western society, the prevalent way of overcoming separateness is by union with the group. But this is a union in which the individual self disappears, whereas mature love is "union under the condition of preserving one's integrity, one's individuality." Thus it comes about that the "equality" to which we all pay lip service is no longer real equality, but merely "sameness." Gone is the uniqueness of the individual, and with it, too, the conviction that no man must be the means for the ends of another man. Gone, too, or at least in the process of disappearing, is the polarity of the sexes, which is the basis of erotic love. Man and woman become the *same*, not *equals* while remaining opposites. And so we get the ideal of the happy marriage as that of "the smoothly functioning team." Automatons cannot love. They can only exchange their "personality packages," and hope for a fair bargain. Thus it is thought—according to Fromm, mistakenly—that the inability of a couple to love one another can be "cured" by instructing them in "correct" sexual behavior—a mistaken notion to the currency of which Freud himself is said to have greatly contributed.

Moreover, just as automatons cannot love

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each other, they cannot love God either. Fromm is not fooled by the present so-called renaissance of religion. He sees in it a regression to idolatry. In a fitting comparison between the works of Dale Carnegie and the Reverend Norman Vincent Peale, Fromm points out what has really happened to religion in our society. Dale Carnegie, whose *How to Win Friends and Influence People* was the best-seller of 1938, had not yet called upon God for purposes of "improving one's personality," but Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* recommends belief in God and prayer as a means of increasing one's ability to be successful. Fromm comments: ". . . in this religious book it is not even questioned whether our dominant concern with success is in itself in accordance with the spirit of monotheistic religion."

Thus, while previous religious cultures took God seriously, in the sense that the permanent goal of life was to live according to God's principles, the invocation of the name of God in our society merely means to make God a partner in business, not to become one with him in love, justice, and truth. "God has been transformed into a remote General Director of Universe, Inc.; you know that he is there, he runs the show (although it would probably run without him too), you never see him, but you acknowledge his leadership while you are 'doing your part.'"

The social forces which debase our love of God also run counter to the Biblical commandment to love our fellow men. This commandment is presented nowadays in terms of the ethics of fairness: "Be fair in your exchange with others." But fairness ethics merely implies respect of the rights of one's neighbor; it does *not* imply responsibility, and it does *not* include the element of love —which, however, is precisely what the Biblical Golden Rule *does* mean and imply. Consequently, the current popularity of the Golden Rule is as unauthentic as is our much vaunted return to God.

Yet no midrash was ever content with mere criticism and condemnation. It must also contain the element of *tanchumin*, of comfort and of hope, which will move the listener or reader toward effort at improvement. Fromm's "midrash" complies with this requirement. It is true that the *principle* underlying capitalist society and the *principle* of love are diametrically opposed. But within the framework of capitalism it is still possible for an individual here and there—for capitalism is a complex and ever-changing structure—to try to practice love without sacrificing his material welfare.

Of course, such an individual will need to have courage, the courage of his convictions, and the courage of faith. Difficult as this may sound, we are all much more accustomed to having faith than we realize. "It takes faith to bring up a child; it takes faith to fall asleep; it takes faith to begin any work." And this faith in the possibility of love is a rational one based on insight into the very nature of man. What is more, this faith can transform the possibility of love from an exceptional and individual case into a social phenomenon, into the kind of society for which Fromm himself has furnished the blueprints in a previous book, *The Sane Society*.

With this note of faith, hope, and love, *The Art of Loving* concludes. We have called this book a midrash, not only because formally it contains all the elements which traditionally go into the structure of a complete midrash. It is a midrash also in the sense that what it has to say, by way of content, fits so perfectly into the traditional Jewish scale of values. *The Art of Loving* is a profoundly Jewish book.

But we have not only called it a midrash. We have called it a "20th-century midrash," for there is indeed a characteristically "modern" and unprecedented element which Fromm has introduced into his discussion of a perennial topic. When the ancient rabbis spoke of Love, they not only took the belief in God for granted, but they were very conscious of the fact that they were helping men in an effort to achieve *imitatio Dei*. "Just as God is called Merciful and Gracious, so be thou merciful and gracious. . . .

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Just as God is called Righteous, so be thou righteous." Thus does the *Sifrei,* an old Tannaitic midrash, interpret the commandment of Deuteronomy 11:22 that we "walk in all of God's ways." And this sentiment can be encountered throughout rabbinic literature. Love is something that comes to man from "on high."

Fromm, who must have been aware of how completely he moves within the terms of reference provided by Jewish tradition, and who has been so eloquent in his exposition of traditional Jewish teaching, takes the opportunity of informing his readers that he himself does "not think in terms of a theistic concept," and that, to him, "the concept of God is only a historically conditioned one, in which man has expressed his experience of his higher powers, his longing for truth and for unity at a given historical period." This raises the interesting question whether the system of Jewish ethics can survive when it is divorced from its theistic moorings; but we are satisfied, at this stage, that Fromm has carefully weighed the available evidence before casting his vote in favor of one of the two possible answers. It is a pity, though, to contemplate the possibility that beautiful and *Jewish* books like *The Art of Loving* may not be produced by a future generation of psychiatrists who will have been brought up on Fromm's non-theistic premises, but who may lack Fromm's own familiarity and first-hand acquaintance with the sources of Jewish tradition. Yet no reader has the right to demand of a scientific author that he share his—the reader's—theological prejudices. And, it may be said in parenthesis, it is good to have a book written by a psychiatrist from time to time which the superficial pulpiteers cannot immediately hail as "supporting the claims of religion."

However, Fromm does more than dissociate himself from theistic ways of thinking. He also produces the evidence which has led him to his present position. In itself, this is standard scientific procedure. But his argument takes a form that is strikingly reminiscent of religious polemics. For Fromm would actually have us believe that, by abandoning theism, he is merely acting out the logical consequences of monotheism itself. How reminiscent this is of the Apostle Paul, who fought against the Law with arguments based on the authority of the Law!

In a fascinating survey of the evolution of the God concept, on which Fromm brings to bear insights derived from both psychology and the study of comparative religion, we read of the transition from totemism (man feels identified with the world of animals and trees, and tries to find unity by remaining one with the natural world) to idolatry (man transforms the product of his own hand into a god). At a later stage, man gives his gods the form of human beings; and this, in turn, leads in matriarchal societies to an emphasis on the Mother Goddess—an emphasis, by the way, which never completely disappeared, even after matriarchal had given way to patriarchal society, which latter is responsible for the concept of the Father God. What has been said about human motherly love applies also to the love of the Mother deity. It is unconditional love, love that can neither be controlled nor acquired. Its presence gives the loved person a sense of bliss: men are loved, and loved equally, because they are all children of Mother Earth.

When we get to the patriarchal phase of religion, we find that the Supreme Being as Father has taken on the role of the human father. His love depends upon obedience to his demands. But since this love can be acquired, and since, moreover, there are ways and means of acquiring it, some sons are more loved than others, and thus the patriarchal society becomes hierarchical. The equality of the brothers gives way to competition and mutual strife. (Yet the wish for mother's love persists, as witness the role of the Virgin in Catholicism, and the role of the *Shechinah* in Jewish mysticism. Even Luther's concept of God's love as "grace," i.e. undeserved, arbitrary love, puts the "mother" element back into the godhead.)

The Jewish religion, is, of course, a re-

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ligion of the patriarchal type. The Jewish God decides to destroy the human race by flood because it has displeased Him. He demands of Abraham that he kill his only son as an act of ultimate obedience. And He has His favorites, both among individuals and nations. But at the same time a new element is introduced: God makes covenants by which He Himself is bound. He is transformed from a despotic tribal chief into a loving father.

All this is, of course, common knowledge. But Fromm goes further; he sees a transformation of God from the figure of a father into a symbol of the father's principles: *viz.*, justice, truth, and love. "In this development God ceases to be a person, a man, a father; he becomes the symbol of the principle of unity behind the manifoldness of phenomena. . . ." Fromm makes much of God's revelation to Moses (Exodus 3:14f), where He, as a concession to an idolatrous people, reveals His name as *ehyeh asher ehyeh,* which Fromm translates "I am becoming that which I am becoming," and which Fromm would like to paraphrase as "my name is nameless." He couples this with the prohibition against making any image of God, with the prohibition against taking God's name in vain, and with the ultimate prohibition against pronouncing that name at all. And all this, according to Fromm, is aimed at one and the same goal: "that of freeing man from the idea that God is a father, that he is a person." Further confirmation is adduced from the "negative theology" of Maimonides, in which positive attributes are denied to God, and from the Cabbala, which knows God as *En Sof,* "the Endless One."

THE logical consequence of monotheistic thought, then, for Fromm, is the negation of all "theology," of all "knowledge about God." "The truly religious person, if he follows the essence of the monotheistic idea . . . does not love God as a child loves his father or his mother; he has acquired the humility of sensing his limitations, to the degree of knowing that he knows nothing about God. God becomes to him a symbol in which man, at an earlier stage of his evolution, has expressed the totality of that which man is striving for. . . ."

Now we do not quarrel with Fromm about his rejection of the theistic concept, but we are slightly amused by the pedigree he has constructed to establish the legitimacy of his disbelief. The Cabbala does indeed speak of the "Endless One." But does this exhaust the God concept in Jewish mysticism? Is it not Fromm himself who reminds us that "in the Jewish religion the mother aspects of God are reintroduced especially in the various currents of mysticism"? Again Maimonides is certainly opposed to anthropomorphism in any form, but he also begins his legal *Code* with the words: "The foundation of all foundations, and the pillar of all knowledge, is to know that there is a First Existence who called into being all that exists. . . ."

And is it really accurate to say that, at *any* stage in the development of the Jewish religion (outside, perhaps, Kaplan's Reconstructionism), there has ever been a development in which God has ceased to be a person or a father? On the contrary, is it not rather a fact that the apologetes of Judaism vis-à-vis the claims of the Church (which used to boast that the idea of the "Heavenly Father" was discovered by Jesus) have been at pains to prove that the concept of God the "father" is *already* found in the Old Testament? Would Fromm describe the rabbis and Jesus, who invoked their "Heavenly Father" in prayer, and who—*pace* the theories about matriarchal and patriarchal religions—spoke of God as "Father" particularly on occasions when they wanted to emphasize His "quality of mercy"—would Fromm describe them as *retrogressing* to a stage already left behind in the Biblical period?

What Fromm has to say about the prohibition of taking the Lord's name in vain, and, later, of pronouncing it altogether, may indeed have had the refining effect which he ascribes to it. But only in retrospect! For, at the time of their promulga-

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tion, these prohibitions were predicated on the assumption that God *had* a name, one, moreover, which could be used for magical purposes but ought not be.

No doubt, Fromm has had predecessors in his rejection of monotheistic theology, but they do not include Maimonides or the Cabbalists. His real intellectual ancestors are located even further East than Maimonides—in Oriental thought and mysticism, and it is there that Fromm finally winds up. He traces a development in Oriental thought which is parallel to, yet distinct from, that of Western monotheism. The end result of this excursion into the Oriental mind is the discovery that in the Eastern systems the emphasis is on the right way of living rather than on dogmatic believing. And, happily, the Jewish tradition itself almost becomes "kosher" to Fromm when he finds that Pharisaism, too, places its emphasis on the right way of living, and when he discovers that the word *Halachah* has the same meaning as the word Tao.

It is in this spirit, then, that we want to judge *The Art of Loving,* in the spirit revealed in the Talmud when it puts into the mouth of God the words: "Would that they forsake Me if only they keep My Law!" These words could have been spoken with reference to Fromm's book. But from a Jewish point of view they do not represent the ideal. They indicate but a makeshift arrangement. Judaism wants God as well as His Law. If Fromm thinks that he has been able to "transcend" the God concept, it is only because, as a scientist, he has to take the worm's eye view of evolution: from the bottom up. And the "up" can never contain more than what is visible from below.

Judaism, on the other hand, as we said before, takes the view from "on high." Love is understood in terms of Revelation. God is Love, and He reveals to man of Himself. Therefore man can grow in his capacity to love, and this growth will indicate a deepening awareness of the nature of God. But man can never "outgrow" the God concept itself.

The Golden Rule is a case in point. It not only says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," but adds the words: "I am the Lord" (Lev. 19:18). These words are no afterthought; they are the key to the whole concept. And they are particularly relevant when it is a question of opposing, as Fromm wants to do, the predominant trends in our society for the sake of spreading true love.

"Every man is our brother," wrote the late Leo Baeck in *The Essence of Judaism.* "He is so *by virtue of God,* through God, and therefore absolutely, and independently of any qualification or condition. It is not our affection or good will which make him 'our brother,' it is not just the effect of a social institution or a state constitution, but God has made him so, God conferred the title on him. Through God every man is our fellow. . . . We are related by God to each other, the Lord is the maker of us all."

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A CHAIR IN HEAVEN

A Story

ANZIA YEZIERSKA

I MET Sara Rosalsky's daughter, Mrs. Hyman, at the home of a friend where I was baby-sitting. One day she asked me to work for her.

"I need someone to sit with my mother. She is seventy-nine, has nothing to do all day, and she has to have someone to talk to. My brothers don't have time for her, so it's up to me."

Mrs. Hyman hesitated a moment. She gave me a long reflective look before she went on. "You're almost my mother's age, you'd be wonderful company for her, and I'd pay well. I'm a nervous wreck, and I must have a rest. I need someone to sit with her a few times a week. Would you do it?"

She offered to pay five dollars a visit, and I needed those few extra dollars. I agreed to visit her mother Monday and Wednesday afternoons.

MR. AND Mrs. Hyman called for me in their car the next afternoon.

"We'll introduce you as a friend," Mrs. Hyman said on our way to her mother's house. "Mamma loves to talk about herself. All you have to do is listen—"

"But for heaven's sake," Mr. Hyman added apprehensively, "don't let on that you're being paid." He took a ten-dollar bill from his wallet and handed it to me. "This covers today and next Wednesday."

The old lady met us at the door. She gave her daughter a swift, disapproving glance. "Another new suit?" She fingered the cloth of the sleeve appraisingly as her daughter jerked away. "Well, it's good stuff, but the style ain't for you. It makes you look like a barrel of potatoes." Then she saw me. Her gray eyes, oddly young in her deep-wrinkled face, lighted in glad surprise.

"Who is this? Come in! Come in! Don't stand there at the door!" Limping on her cane, one leg stiff with arthritis, she led the way to the living room.

Alongside Sara Rosalsky's tall, wiry figure, Mrs. Hyman looked short and dumpy, overshadowed by her mother's extraordinary vitality.

"How's my big girl today?" Mr. Hyman kissed his mother-in-law on both cheeks with resounding smacks. Mrs. Hyman retreated into a corner as far away from her mother as possible, took her knitting out of the bag and began clicking her needles.

"This is a friend of ours, a writer," Mr. Hyman waved toward me, proudly. "She heard about your charities for widows and orphans. So she wanted to meet you."

Sara Rosalsky's rapacious gray eyes took swift inventory of the lines in my face, the shabbiness of my hat, the darned patches at the elbows of my sweater. "So you're a writer?" I felt her looking me over with the same intensity with which she had appraised the cloth of her daughter's suit. "If you are really a writer, then I got for you a story! My own story!" She reached for a leather-bound scrapbook and handed it to me. "Read! Read only who I am!"

Yellowed clippings were pasted down with scotch tape. "Sara Rosalsky, President of the United Sisters" . . . "Sara Rosalsky Donates $5,000" . . . "Sara Rosalsky" . . . "Sara Rosalsky." I closed the book and looked at her.

"Now you see who I was! And I'm still

BORN in Poland, ANZIA YEZIERSKA came to America in 1901. Her book of sketches, *Hungry Hearts,* published in 1920, established her reputation as a chronicler of Jewish immigrant life. Her most recent book, *Red Ribbon on a White Horse,* was reviewed in our issue of January 1951.

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not yet dead!" Her voice grew shrill, as if she were still fighting at the pushcarts. "Education I never had. I scrubbed floors, cleaned toilets, and collected garbage from a six-story tenement so my children should have college, so they shouldn't be, God forbid, tailors, janitors, or pushcart peddlers. I made one son a doctor, one a lawyer. And my daughter a schoolteacher—but not an old maid schoolteacher. That's why I cry to heaven, after all I did for them why should they leave me so alone?"

Mrs. Hyman's knitting fell to the floor. Her hands were clenched in her lap. "You're not alone now. We brought a friend. And you still complain. What more do you want?"

"How long since you were here? You leave your mother to die alone, like a dog in the street!"

"Shah! Shah!" Mr. Hyman put his arms around Mrs. Rosalsky. "You know Rose thinks the world of you. Why did she bring you her best friend? Come now! Let's have some tea with your wonderful apple strudel. Nobody can make apple strudel like you."

He got up from the overstuffed red velvet ottoman on which he had perched precariously, his short legs in hand-stitched gabardine slacks scarcely reaching the floor. Presently he reappeared with a big tray of steaming glasses of tea and a plate of apple strudel. The semblance of peace was restored.

As I drank my tea, I looked around. Fringes on the window shades, ruffles on the curtains. Shirred chiffon and lace adorned the lamp shades. Peacock feathers formed an arch over the huge gilt clock. All the rococo of the Bronx of fifty years before rioted here, in this room.

I glanced from the figurines and vases on the mantelpiece to the colorful scatter-rugs jostling one another on the red-carpeted floor.

"I see you like my things!" Mrs. Rosalsky nodded, pride of possession shining in her eyes. "I love color, beautiful things make me happy. Those are genuine peacock feathers," pointing with her cane. "And that clock comes from the palace of a Russian prince. It's worth a fortune! I got it at an auction for forty-nine fifty."

She leaned back in her chair, her eyes distantly focused, seeing past triumphs. "Ah-h! When I was young and had my health, I knew how to get bargains!"

"At whose expense, your bargains?" Savagely Mrs. Hyman pushed away her plate and threw open the window, as if choking for air.

Ignoring her daughter, Mrs. Rosalsky refilled my cup, and after insisting that I eat a second helping of strudel, she put the remaining piece in a napkin and smilingly handed it to me. "Here's something for you. Take it home—"

"Oh, no. Thank you—"

"Never mind thanking me, take it. Come soon again and I'll give you more."

As I was being driven home, I said to Mrs. Hyman, "Your mother is so alive for her age—"

"Yes. So alive that she wears us all out." Mrs. Hyman gave a long sigh. "That's why we need you."

The hoarded hurts of a lifetime rankled in her low, tight voice. "Mamma despises me because she neglected me. The days she went bargain-hunting at auction sales, I had to look after my brothers. But if a day passes and she has no one to talk to but the cleaning woman, she phones the neighbors that she's dying, abandoned by her children. She'll never die, she'll outlive us all—"

"No need to get hysterical," her husband laughed. "You know what the doctor said."

Mrs. Hyman turned to me. "She doesn't get under his skin the way she does with me. He can be nice to her."

"It's not everybody can do what she did with nothing," Mr. Hyman said with almost religious conviction. "In the depression, when millionaires were jumping out of windows, she turned the hard times into a gold mine."

"But how did she do it?" Mrs. Hyman struck out angrily. "Painters, plumbers, carpenters were begging for work. God! How

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she wheedled and badgered them to rebuild that old rat-trap tenement! Labor and materials, everything—on credit—"

"Sure! She rode over people. She got what she wanted. And that's something not everybody can do. Not every janitress ends up owning five apartment houses."

Mrs. Hyman stared gloomily in front of her. "Just the same, when people say I resemble Mamma, I get frightened. I'd hate to be like her, even with all her money—not that I know how much she has."

Both mother and daughter had left a bad taste in my mouth, and I made up my mind not to take the job. But I had accepted advance payment for my next visit. I decided that it would be my last. However, the following Wednesday afternoon, when I walked in, Sara Rosalsky was so overjoyed to see me that my resolution faltered.

"Are you really here or am I dreaming?" The pleading tone of her voice was like a dog's licking of your hand, panting for affection. "How glad I am to see you! Did you maybe come for more apple strudel?"

"I came because I wanted to see you," I said.

"What a friend! What a pleasure is a friend when alone as I am alone."

She pointed to a red velvet armchair and sat down opposite in her rocker. Her white hair had a natural wave which set off her deeply lined but still handsome face. There was about her an ageless, elemental force hard to define. For a long moment she looked at me in silence. In that silence I saw myself in her eyes.

"Everybody is out to get something. But you're really a friend. You come to see me for myself. Even my own daughter comes only when she wants more money. But one good thing she did yet in her life—she brought you to me. The minute I saw you I felt I could talk myself out to you from under my heart."

The next morning Mrs. Hyman telephoned me. "You made a big hit with Mamma and you did a wonderful job for me. She says you're the only person who understands who she is. She is so proud to have a writer for a friend. Your check for next week is in the mail already."

I needed that check as desperately as Sara Rosalsky needed someone to talk to.

Weeks later, the daughter invited me to dinner. "It's a godsend to have you with Mamma," she said. "I used to be a nervous wreck when I had to see her. Now that she has you to talk to, she lets me alone. And I'm not a bit jealous." She laughed mirthlessly, but jealousy edged her voice as she went on. "I could never figure out Mamma's secret for making money. Even now, old as she is, and without lifting a finger, her real estate is going up. And the richer she gets, the more secretive she is. We know nothing about her will, yet her end might come any day."

But Sara Rosalsky, now that she had someone to talk to, instead of thinking of her end, reverted to her beginnings. "If you only could have seen me when I was young! It burned in me to do something, to work myself up in the world! My aunt who raised me, she hated me. To get away from her I married a man who could not even make a living. . . . I didn't know I was beautiful till the roomer next door asked to paint my picture. He looked like a prince. And I was afraid . . . you know men. They don't know when to stop. . . ."

She looked into the mirror. Her fingers caressed her withered cheek. "He said my skin was pure roses. . . . What a shape I had! Not like the skinny things these days! My bust! My hips!" Her hands rounded out her vanished curves. "And my husband was so jealous when men laid eyes on me! But I know God sees everything. And I was pure as an angel."

A smile, a furtive sense of humor glimmered in the corners of her eyes. "My daughter, poor thing, she isn't like me at all. I even had to get her a husband. My son Danny, the doctor, resembles me only in looks. But when it comes to brains, my son the lawyer has it. He's smarter than the others, but smart only for himself. If I'd trust him with my houses, I'd be in the

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street. God forbid I should have to ask him for a dollar."

HER torrent of emotion never abated. At every visit she bombarded me with another tale of herself. Together with the clippings and photographs in her scrapbook, her words made her seem less and less real, more and more like a record going around and around. . . . Often, against my will, I would doze off.

Sometimes pride in her achievements gave way to dark memories of her childhood in Poland. "I'd be better off to go begging by strangers than to be a *nebich*—a poor nobody—by my rich aunt. Never once a pair of shoes that fitted me! Everything a hand-me-down!"

The memory was an unbearable one. She opened the scrapbook.

"Look!" she cried exultantly, pointing to a faded photograph. "The United Sisters of the Fordham Temple, at a hundred-dollar-a-plate dinner, in honor of my birthday. Me! I gave it all to charity!" Prominent in the photograph was a huge banner, stretched above the speakers' table: "HAPPY BIRTHDAY! GOD BLESS OUR PRESIDENT SARA ROSALSKY!"

"Is there a joy on earth like the joy of taking your hand away from your heart to help the poor?" She beamed. "When I sent my birthday present, five thousand dollars, to the Federation, I felt like I bought myself a chair in heaven! And that's when I made my will."

She clasped her hands, gazing at her picture. "Where are they all? They used to come to me from everywhere, like to Mrs. Roosevelt, for my speeches, for my picture in the papers. I was a queen. Everybody smiled up to me. I had a million friends. And now, from all my friends I got only you."

She looked me over with affectionate tolerance.

"If I dressed you up you wouldn't know yourself."

With an effort, she pulled herself up on the cane, limped to the bureau, opened a drawer stuffed with scarves and shawls. She held up one shawl, then another, eyes gleaming. "You never ask for anything. And I like you so much I want to give you something." She wrapped a plaid silk shawl around me. "Why do you dress so plain, like a schoolteacher? This puts color in your face."

I looked in the mirror. The colors were so lovely. "Is it really for me?" I asked.

She felt the shawl with greedy fingers and snatched it off, whisking it into the drawer. "Oh no—this is hand-made imported, from France—Paris! But I'll find you something you'll like." She rummaged in her crowded closet and pulled out a faded purple velvet hat with a rhinestone buckle and insisted that I try it on. It was no use attempting to convince her that I could never wear that hat. It was easier to accept than to argue her out of her benevolence. To reassure herself of her generosity, she insisted that I come to lunch the next day.

"You look like you don't eat enough. I'd like to feed you up."

I FOUND the table set as for a feast.

"Is it a holiday?" I asked, surprised at the display.

"Your company is my holiday," she responded gaily. "You make me feel I'm still a person. You know how I can't sleep. But when you come, I forget all my worries and sleep like a child." She leaned over and took my hand in hers. "Tell me, dear friend! How would you like to live here with me?"

I looked at the nightmare around me. The peacock feathers, the gilt clock.

"Why should you pay rent for a hole in the wall when you can stay in my beautiful home and eat by me the best for nothing?" She piled more chicken on my plate. "I love company. If I could finish out my years with you, my friend, always near. . . ."

She had a way of looking at me, seeing only herself. "Did I ever tell you how I started up in real estate with nothing but my two hands?" For the hundredth time she recited her rise from janitress to landlady. "Me, president of the United Sisters! And

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once I nearly starved to death! Such a story could go into the movies. You could make a fortune from writing my life—"

"Let me think it over," I said, slipping into my coat. She fingered the threadbare elbow of my sleeve. "Here! Let me give you carfare!"

Heretofore when she thought of carfare, she counted out the exact amount of change. Now she pushed a dollar bill into my hand. "Go in good health!"

I left, disgusted with myself for having accepted the dollar. At that moment I could understand the hate that Sara Rosalsky roused in her daughter, so that she had to hire me to substitute for her.

Waiting for the bus to take me home, I watched the branches of the trees against the autumn sky. "Nothing to do but listen," her daughter had said. Good God! The torture of listening to someone who cannot stop talking! By the time I got to my room the telephone was ringing. Mrs. Rosalsky in her imperious voice demanded, "Well, my good friend? How soon will you move over to me?"

My hand tightened into a fist as she went on. "You know me. What I want I want when I want it. And I want you by my side, the sooner the better."

"I'm sorry. No. No. I can't move—"

"Why?" she gasped, shocked into silence for a moment. Then she rushed on. "I can give you everything. I helped other people. I'd like to help you. I even got a cot all ready to put into my bedroom. In my beautiful home you'll have the best for nothing—"

"Thank you, but I have to live my own life in my own place," I said with finality.

At the usual time I went to get paid. Sara Rosalsky's daughter lived in a residence hotel on upper Broadway. Well-groomed people went in and out of the lobby. I picked up the house phone, asked for Mrs. Hyman. A moment later I heard her friendly, flustered voice.

"My brothers are here. You're just in time to join us for coffee and meet the rest of the family."

I was glad of her welcome, but in no mood to be scrutinized by her brothers. Though I could not live under one roof with Sara Rosalsky, I needed the money my two visits a week brought me. But knowing the daughter and son-in-law was enough. I did not want to get involved with the rest of the family.

They had finished eating and were sitting around smoking and drinking coffee when I walked in.

Mrs. Hyman drew up a chair for me. "Here's the friend that goes to see Mamma." She handed me a dish of plum pudding. "I knew you were coming, so I saved some dessert for you."

"And give our friend plenty wine sauce," Mr. Hyman added.

The doctor, a slender, refined edition of his mother, smiled at me. "So you're the lady that Mother has taken such a fancy to?"

The lawyer held out a plump, manicured hand. "Sis has told us about you," he said in a mellow, cultivated voice. "I can easily understand Mother's liking you." Then turning to his sister, "Wasn't it wonderful that we found such a good friend for Mother?" As his appraising glance swept over me, I noticed his short, thickset figure smoothly draped in dark blue, and the fringe of graying hair about his baldness. I recalled his mother's words, "smarter than the others, but smart for himself."

Looking around, I was struck by the contrast between the color and clutter of Sara Rosalsky's overcrowded home and the fashionable austerity of the Hymans' apartment. Here an interior decorator had achieved something bloodless and impersonal. There was a deeper contrast in the faces. The children had their mother's sharp, strong features, but they were only pallid replicas of the mother's extraordinary vitality. The passion of desire which drove Sara Rosalsky had bled out between generations.

To my surprise they knew that their mother wanted me to live with her, and they tried to persuade me to do so.

"Just *like* Mamma to want you all to herself," Mrs. Hyman said. "But in a way it

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would be a relief if you could do it. The doctor said she may die in her sleep, or drop dead, any day. It would be a godsend for us all if someone like you were there to keep an eye on her all the time—"

"But—" I protested.

"We'd pay you for a full-time job, so you could afford to keep your own little place," Mr. Hyman urged.

I felt the full force of their solicitude mobilized, closing in on me. But I was determined not to be pressed into giving up my entire time to Sara Rosalsky, and so I told them I could only continue the usual two afternoons a week.

It was not until weeks later, when I had stopped in at Mrs. Hyman's for my check, that their real motives emerged.

Mrs. Hyman was serving me tea and cake when she leaned over confidentially. "I feel close enough to you now, after all these months, to be quite frank with you." She smiled nervously, imploring sympathy. "You know how secretive Mamma is. What we've never been able to find out is what she's worth. And yet her end may come any day."

It was all I could do to conceal my embarrassment at what her words implied.

"We all look upon you now not only as Mamma's friend, but as a friend of the family." She pushed her chair closer and clutched my hand with some of her mother's urgency. "You could help us enormously if you could get Mamma to talk to you about her will."

Something in my expression must have communicated itself to her. She suddenly stopped talking. But after a pause, she added desperately, "It's only reasonable! If we knew where we stood, we could plan a little better. Don't you see?"

I saw only too well. But by now I was so deeply implicated, so enmeshed in guilt, that I saw no way out. If I gave up the job suddenly because I hated the hypocrisy of posing as Sara Rosalsky's friend, she would be very much hurt. If I got the courage to tell her the truth, that I was being paid for every visit she thought to be the visit of a friend, wouldn't that shatter her? But if I remained on the job, I could never do what the daughter was really paying me to do. Now I realized how that first advance payment to pose as a friend had drawn me into Sara Rosalsky's struggle with her children. Anxiety over my involvement grew with my curiosity as to how it would end. With each succeeding visit I found myself caught more and more in a strange double role—employed by the daughter, but wanting to shield the mother from the very thing for which the daughter had hired me.

MRS. HYMAN had always been prompt in mailing the advance payments the times she made no arrangements for me to come to her apartment for a chat. Suddenly, one Monday morning, the check that I had been counting on failed to come. It was inconvenient, but I did not allow it to worry me. But when a week had passed and there was still no check, I was so disturbed that I stopped at Mrs. Hyman's before going to Sara Rosalsky. Over the house phone she sounded harassed and preoccupied. "Oh, it's you? I have your check. I'm on my way down. Please wait there for me."

A few minutes later she came out of the elevator and greeted me with a fixed smile which belied the anxiety in her eyes.

"I've been planning to talk to you," she said, opening her purse and handing me a check. "I might as well tell you right off—it won't be possible to keep you on with Mamma any longer."

I was too startled to say anything.

"You've done Mamma a lot of good. I know she'll miss you. But to carry you any longer is a luxury we can't afford. I've already told Mamma that you've been called to Boston, so she shouldn't pester you with telephones. I'm in a hurry to go to her right now."

I scarcely heard her. I thought only of getting away. I walked the streets hardly knowing where I was going. An hour later, entering the subway, I discovered the check still clenched in my hand.

By the time I got back to my room I had recovered sufficiently to feel vastly re-

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lieved. I had been magically freed from an exhausting hell of a job. And I had been paid. I told myself it was for the best.

But as the days passed, I could not get Sara Rosalsky out of my mind. I tried to reason with myself—you were hired, now you're fired, and that's that. But I could not reason myself out of my need to know what was happening to her. She is so alone, a voice within me pleaded. Her children are only waiting for her to die. She has no one but me. I have to go to her. Why so hot on the trail? another voice demanded. What's in it for you? If I abandon her, I abandon myself, my conscience cried.

What had started out as a casual job had become, despite all my resistance, a deeper commitment. You can be fired from a job, but not from a relationship. Yet when I tried to define for myself the relation that existed between Sara Rosalsky and me, I was plunged into a deeper muddle of confusion than on my first visit more than a year before.

I'd wake up in the middle of the night and, in a sudden burst of clarity, hear Sara Rosalsky's voice: "Take a good look at yourself!" As in a dream I saw that Sara Rosalsky was myself, the shadow I had left behind me, the shadow of father, mother, brothers and sisters—the relationships I had uprooted in my search for the life I had never found.

WHEN I went to Sara Rosalsky, after a week's absence, my chief concern was to protect her from the knowledge that my friendship had been hired.

The cleaning woman answered my knock and showed me in. Sara Rosalsky sat in her high-backed chair by the window, staring into space, as if she had lost all contact with her surroundings. The shade was down. Even in the near-darkness I noticed how she had suddenly shrunken. Her nose, her cheekbones stood out sharply. Her eyes were sunk deep in her head.

I glanced quickly at the large, garish portrait of her that I had been called upon many times to admire. The artist had caught something ruthless and indomitable in the young eyes, and in the resolute mouth the fierce obsession of a will to possess—the hunger for love which strives only to conquer. I looked at the face of the dying old woman. Youth, beauty, ambition had come to this.

She mumbled to herself. "With what did I sin? I wanted my children should be smarter than me. College I gave them. Now, my enemies. Why is God punishing me?"

Suddenly she looked up at me.

"Now you come! Now!" she lashed out accusingly. "How could you go away to Boston without telling me? I thought you were my friend, I told you everything! But it didn't touch you! I was talking to a stone." Her outburst gave way to an anguished wail of helplessness.

Peering at me suspiciously, she said, "Did I just talk myself into it that you were my friend?"

Before I could frame my reply, she began fumbling at a tissue-wrapped parcel on the table. "I didn't think you'd come any more. And yet I still hoped. I wanted to give you this." And she thrust at me the shawl with which she had been unable to part a few weeks before.

"There is a God, isn't there?" She fixed the searching sharpness of her eyes on me. "Who makes life? Who makes death? Everything that lives must die. My time has come. I want to die."

She waved a hand at the bottles on the table. "There's enough there to finish me." The ghost of a smile turned into a look of despair. "In God's name! Save me from my children! Please, my friend, help me get into an old people's home! I want to die near people!"

MRS. Hyman flared up like a maniac when I told her what her mother wanted. "A home for Mamma? She's insane! After all we did for her! Why should a home get the money?" It was as though I had put a match to gunpowder and the resentments of a lifetime exploded. "Senile! Mamma has been senile for the last ten years. Only her terror of dying keeps her

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alive. She's due for a stroke any day. She keeps going to spite us!"

Early next morning I was roused from sleep by the ringing of the telephone.

"My friend! My only friend! Come!" Sara Rosalsky implored. "Don't wait till I'm dead. They did it. They doped me. They moved me to a hotel where lives my son the doctor."

The door was partly open when I got there. She was in bed, propped on pillows. Her face was gray; sweat gathered in the deep furrows of her forehead. She looked uprooted in the alien hotel room. A terrible sadness was in her eyes. It came from long ago. The unloved, unwanted child persisted to the end—naked, alone, facing death.

She motioned to the nurse at her bedside to leave. I sat down beside her, put my hand on hers.

"Look on the walls! Empty, cold as the grave!" Her voice cracked into a sob. "They tore me away from my things before I'm yet dead—my pictures, my clock, my peacock feathers. I lived with them so long, they were company."

A choking spell seized her. When she regained her breath she dozed off for a few minutes. Suddenly, her bosom began to heave like a bellows. She sat up in a fury of indignation.

"They think they got me in their hands, but even from the grave, I'll show them yet!" She paused for breath, then hurried on. "Nothing I left them! Nothing! Everything I have, more than a million, will go to an old people's home."

Her head sank on the pillow. Anger, resentment, her life-blood ebbed away. In the wide-open eyes, no longer demanding, no longer commanding, I saw the peace that had never been there before. I realized that I was still holding her hand. Little by little, the warmth was receding from her fingers.

The nurse came in, touched her forehead, lifted her wrist. "Dead," she whispered, pulling down the lids over Sara Rosalsky's eyes.

For years after her death, the children fought in the courts for their mother's millions. I could not care who won—the children or the charity with which Sara Rosalsky had hoped to buy for herself a chair in heaven.

THE SAINT

IRVING FELDMAN

God, you were the handle to every door
And I walked the world unlocking them
To find always myself. I see the poor
And starve, the naked are my shame,
The evil undo, the sick burn
Me, the wretched are my sorrow.
I never wanted this—so to be torn
By the plow of pity in every furrow.

I wanted only to be there,
And be still and slowly to grow
Empty and round, to be all in my ear
And listen for your endless Now.

But this goodness gives me away from you,
For love has scattered my soul through
Fields and towns. I rise like grass
Against myself, so thick I cannot pass
To you till I wither in every part.
O God, I would have been your hollow gulf!
Why did you put your dam across my heart
To overwhelm me with myself!

Irving Feldman is a young Fulbright Scholar now in Paris, working on a translation of Laforgue. His review of three collections of European short stories appeared in our October number.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

A SUMMER KADDISH

The Tenth Man

ALAN BENJAMIN

SH'LOSHIM, the first sorrowful month of mourning. I now began a new schedule of living, arising each day a full hour earlier than was my custom. Then from their embroidered velvet sack I would take the *t'filin,* now cleaned and made ready for use again. Patiently our rabbi had re-introduced me to their windings and the prayers that went with them.

You know the story well enough. Many of us attend services only three times a year. I had gone nearly every Friday night and on an occasional Saturday morning. Now all that was changed by the thrice-daily recitations of *kaddish*—each morning, afternoon, and evening. My whole life had to be re-ordered. More than once, I was obliged to *daven minchah* and *ma-ariv* in strange places, under strange conditions, in order to recite *kaddish* before and after sundown.

My business suffered. Duties neglected during the first week's *shiva,* and less than half-heartedly attended to the week following, piled up and demanded attention. But I fulfilled my obligations, regardless of the difficulties, for twenty-nine days.

THIS, then, is the story of my thirtieth day of mourning. More correctly, my thirtieth evening, for the days are reckoned from sundown rather than sunrise.

That morning before going to the office I said *kaddish* with our regular *minyan.* In the afternoon I telephoned my wife to tell her that I would be home from work early, about six. Would she please have dinner ready so that I could leave before seven? I had a most important business appointment later that evening at a place nearly thirty miles from home.

Mother had died early in July; it was now August. Those congregations that had not suspended for the summer were holding their evening services around seven forty-five or eight o'clock. I felt sure that if I left home by seven, I would find a *minyan* somewhere along my way. But to be safe, I consulted the telephone book and on a slip of paper noted the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of congregations in the communities I would be driving through.

The setting sun shone brightly enough when I stopped at a gas station in the first town on my itinerary. The attendant could direct me to the synagogue but could not say whether it was open evenings. It was not.

And so I drove to the next place on my list, only to find that it too was closed. Outside, on its bulletin board was listed the phone number of the rabbi's study. I dialed it but got no response. I spent the next ten minutes trying to reach the other synagogues whose telephone numbers I had taken down. None answered.

There was little time left. I returned to my car and headed for the town where my appointment was. The synagogue there was my last hope. But in my haste I lost

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ALAN BENJAMIN was born in New York City in 1908, and is currently in the photo album business. He has served as president of the Hillside Hollis Hebrew Center in Long Island and contributed to *American Judaism,* as well as several trade magazines. This is his first appearance in COMMENTARY.

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my way, and began wandering over unfamiliar roads. A policeman was able to tell me how to reach the main road off which the synagogue was located, but did not know whether I should then turn left or right.

"Which way is the town itself?" I asked.

"To the left," he told me, and so, when I came to the road, I turned left. My logic backfired. I reached the town without finding the synagogue. But I found two Jews who were able to direct me to it. I should have turned right, they said.

The sun could no longer be seen in the sky when I turned my car around and started to retrace my route. Just past the point where I had made my wrong turn I found the synagogue. It stood on a hill, and as I sped toward it I whispered to myself the words of the *kaddish,* hoping that God would find them an acceptable substitute for those which should have been spoken with the *minyan* I had surely missed. But a light shone in one room of the building, and another kindled in my heart.

I left my parked car. Through the glass front of the synagogue I could see men closing their *sidurim.* The light in my heart went out, my chance of a final *kaddish* gone. I bolted through the door.

"Am I too late for a *kaddish?*" I begged more than asked.

"My son," replied the rabbi, "we're waiting for you. You're our tenth for a *minyan.*"

We began our prayers, those nine men and I. Words on the page, which I could not read through misty eyes, found their way to my lips by rote. No one asked me questions; I volunteered no answers. When the last *amen* was said, I thanked the rabbi with a silent handshake, a mourner's thanks for a summer *kaddish.*

"*Ma tovu*—how goodly are thy tent(h)s, O Jacob!"

LEO BAECK 1873-1956

Leo Baeck, one of the great Jews of our time, died in London in November at the age of eighty-three. His departure is a loss in more senses than one. His contribution lay not only in his thought, in his writings, and in his achievements as a religious leader, but even more in his personal example, which was both a heroic and a saintly one, in the best and oldest Jewish tradition.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

JOY IN THE HOLY DAYS

From "Religion of Reason"

HERMANN COHEN

HERMANN COHEN was born in the small town of Coswig, in Anhalt, Germany, in 1842. Abandoning his intention of becoming a rabbi —his father was a cantor and a teacher of Hebrew—he devoted himself instead to the study of philosophy. After attending the universities at Breslau, Berlin, and Halle, he was appointed instructor in philosophy at the University of Marburg, where, becoming a professor, he taught until 1912. There he founded the famous "Marburg School" of Neo-Kantianism.

His interest in Judaism—he had been given a thorough Talmudic training by his father, and had studied for a time at the Jewish Theological Seminary in Breslau—was re-awakened in 1880 by the attack of the historian Heinrich von Treitschke (1834-1896) on the Jews as an alien element in the German nation. Answering this charge in lectures and essays, Cohen became intensely concerned with Jewish thought and life (at this time he began calling himself *Baal Teshuvah*—the one who returns) and this concern led him, in 1904, to play a leading role in establishing the Society for the Advancement of Jewish Studies in Berlin. After retiring from his professorial post and moving to Berlin from Marburg, he concentrated his activities in Jewish channels, gathering about him a small circle of disciples, among whom was Franz Rosenzweig. By the time of his death in 1918, Cohen had made Judaism the basis of his own philosophic idealism, and in his numerous works on Jewish subjects had expounded Jewish Messianism as the key to the meaning of man in history.

The following excerpt forms the conclusion to Cohen's monumental posthumous *Die Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums* (Religion of Reason from the Sources of Judaism), and appears here as translated by William Wolf. Other selections from Cohen's writings appeared in the "Cedars of Lebanon" for December 1945 and January 1946.—ED.

IT HAS great meaning that those Jewish holidays which are not directly dedicated to the idea of atonement are dedicated to joy. "Thou shalt rejoice in thy festival, together with thy children and servants, and with the strangers and the orphans and the widows" (Deut. 16:14). Joy is the very purpose and goal of a holiday: not the joy around Dionysus or Bacchus, but one defined by its being shared with strangers and the poor. Such joy is to bring the poor closer to yourself; you are to be happy with them and they are to be happy with you. Such joy is to raise man above social affliction; though this affliction cannot be ignored, it is, on the day of festival, at least to be overcome. The holidays would indeed lose all meaning and value if they were unable to implant for a short time joy in the heart of celebrating man.

And therefore joy in the festival—which joy is its very meaning and foundation—is also a symbol of peace. If it is true that holidays make joy a reality among men, the road to peace becomes a road to life. It is no illusion that the holidays are festivals of joy. The joy that is realized in the holiday of freedom, of deliverance from slavery, and of the divine call to become a kingdom of priests, is no deceptive joy. It is a truly historical joy that celebrates the revelation on Mount Sinai, the legislation of a moral

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world. And it is also a true joy which links the Festival of Harvest with the Wanderings through the Wilderness, concluding with the Rejoicing in the Law as a whole.

Joy is a well-established rubric for these holidays. Joy in the holidays proves peace a fundamental force of the soul and an important road to virtue. Like the festivals, the Sabbath too is such a symbol of peace, establishing a true joy in life and in society. If Judaism had given only the Sabbath to the world, by this alone it would have become a herald of joy and peace to the world. The Sabbath represents the first step toward the ending of slavery and the first step toward erasing the distinction between work of the hand and that of the brain. The Sabbath is the symbol of a joy that will rise over mankind when all men are equal in freedom as in work, in the search for truth as in the struggle for bread. When the Sabbath conquers the world there will be hope and the assurance that joy is not a vain thing, and that the Sabbath's peace is a basic force for mankind, and will remain so. Among all the ways to virtue, peace may well be the straightest, even though that straightness is so often contested and doubted: for peace is the innermost, the least visible power of human and historical consciousness. The priestly blessing contains the essence of the divine blessing, and its conclusion is—peace. There is no blessing that can surpass peace, and mankind would not benefit by God's blessing if He had not counseled peace to them. All virtue would go astray if peace were not the staff and the rod upon all the roads to virtue. For the Hebrew word for peace, *shalom,* means perfection, which is man's very goal. Thus peace is man's supreme goal, and all other goals of nature and of the mind are only means in respect to it. Peace is indeed the spirit of holiness. Peace as man's goal is the Messiah who will resolve all struggles, even the struggle in man himself, and lead him to a reconciliation with God.

Peace in the joy of the festival is a characteristic of Jewish life. It is a miracle that, in spite of all the sufferings which have marked his history, the Jew has been able to preserve such equanimity, even humor, without which he could not have managed to rise out of the deepest humiliation to such proud heights. This miracle is due to the festivals! On the Sabbath as on the holidays, there was joy in the ghetto, no matter what sufferings the week had brought. Joy in the festival was a religious duty, and became an unshakable and vital force in Jewish consciousness.

But it could not have become that had not the mind's peace been such a magical force. "Peace, peace, to him that is far off, and to him that is near, says the Lord, and I will cure him" (Isa. 57:19). Peace was the healing power of prophecy: peace as opposed to warfare, peace as opposed to human passions. Peace pertains to atonement and redemption. And it is founded on knowledge, on Torah. Therefore joy in the festival has always been a part of the study of Torah. Joy was thus founded on the spirit, it was an intellectual joy, so that it did not degenerate into sensuality, or into aesthetic illusions, or magic.

The Jew could never remain a man of mourning; his festivals and his studies raised him always into the heaven of joy. This he owed to peace, which, like other virtues, came to be his natural way of life. If the Jewish character can be described in one word, it is peace. Only he who explores Jewish consciousness to its religious depths can understand this unity. We should expect hatred and vengeance to rule the Jew's mind since he has been hated and oppressed by the whole world. But Jewish teachings and Jewish life make this impossible. A life of religious duties, a life under the "burden of the Law," has set this freedom and this peace into his heart, so that hatred and vengeance cannot dwell there. The burden of the Law is to him the burden of the Heavenly Kingdom, and the Kingdom of God is the kingdom of peace for all the nations.

There is no room for hatred if one believes in peace. Messianism is and remains the basic force of Jewish consciousness. The Messiah is the Prince of Peace. Life receives its meaning and purpose through peace. It is the crown of life.

Life ends in death. But this end is a new beginning. It is characteristic of Jewish consciousness that it connects death with peace. When mentioning the name of the dead, we add "peace is with him." Peace removes the pain of death. It also solves the

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riddle of death. When a man is torn from life, he is not removed from peace but brought closer to it. He is now immediately under God's peace. The memorial to the dead is therefore not concerned with the salvation of a soul, nor does it seek anyone's deliverance from the terrors of Hell. A man has died with a confession on his lips; thus he has attained atonement, he will be saved by the grace of a forgiving God. "Above him is peace"—this is the best that we can say of his existence. Therefore the memory of the dead remains alive in the survivor's imperishable feeling of gratitude and in his resolve to emulate the obedience of the dead.

It is this Jewish concept of death which proves more than anything else that peace is a main force of Jewish virtue. Death is the world of peace. The highest praise of death is that by partaking of peace it is distinguished from the world of struggle and error. Life shall seek peace—and find it in death. Therefore death is not the real ending of life but rather its goal, the prize for which it strives. He who loves peace cannot be afraid of death. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want . . . even in the valley of the shadow of death I fear no evil, for Thou art with me." In death too the Only God is with me. This is the climax in the concept of peace.

The Jewish consciousness is not afraid of death. This can be explained only by the absolute absence of any fear of Hell. God's peace in the Jewish soul does not allow Him to be pictured as a judge of Hell. God is the God of Atonement, and even as a Judge he judges with atonement in mind. We remember our dead in the hope that their souls may be reunited with the souls of the Patriarchs. This is the one thought that is present at our memorial services.

As the Patriarchs themselves were "gathered to their people" when they died, so does every Jew die in the hope of historical survival, of being joined again with his forefathers. Thus death is historical survival. And in this survival it is peace which rules, a peace which has overcome all earthly struggle.

Therefore in a higher sense, too, peace is a way of virtue, leading to eternal life. And eternity is the very goal of all of human life. All temporal things lead to eternity if they are on the right path. That right path is the path of peace. Peace is the virtue of eternity.

It is quite remarkable that the Hebrew word for world, *olam,* also means "eternity." "He hath set the world in their heart" (Eccles. 3:11). Because world is also eternity, one is able to substitute "eternity" for "world" in that Biblical verse. It is peace which explains the apparent contradiction between the two terms. Our present world cannot be called eternal since it is perishable. But this profound Hebrew word reveals our faith in the immortality of man and the eternity of the world. Even at a later time our language preserved this faith, by calling the cemetery "the house of eternity." Death is peace. The grave is the house of eternity. This eternity is the true end of the world, the goal of earthly life. The path of peace leads to this eternity.

But this eternity is only the continuation of earthly life—the same root comprises both aspects of existence, and thus peace which leads to eternity is also the signpost pointing to earthly life, to the beginning of all historical survival. Peace is the symbol of eternity and also the watchword of human life, both in the acts of the individual and in the eternity of that life's historical calling. Such historical eternity reflects Messianic mankind's mission of peace.

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ON THE HORIZON

ANNALS OF THE PRIZE RING

The "Fancy" in America

STEVEN MARCUS

WHEN Gentleman Dick Humphries ascended the stage at Odiham, Hampshire, on January 9, 1788, for his widely heralded first match with Daniel Mendoza, his fighting dress consisted of a pair of fine flannel drawers, white silk stockings with gold-colored clocks, pumps, and black shoe ribbons. After twenty-nine minutes of fighting, during which he had been severely punished, Humphries counter-attacked, and Mendoza, "milling in retreat," slipped on the rain-soaked stage, wrenched his ankle, and was forced to give in. Immediately after the fight Humphries sent word of his triumph to his patron: "Sir, I have done the Jew, and am in good health." Thus, with stylish pageantry and a laconic report, did modern boxing begin.

A. J. Liebling, whose articles on boxing for the *New Yorker* have been collected under the title *The Sweet Science,* is very well informed about the history of the sport and keeps an eye cocked for the traditional pomp and occasional humor which have always done so much toward civilizing this most primitive of modern entertainments. He dutifully notes Archie Moore's "black silk mandarin robe with gold piping"; he records a handler's deathless comment about the follow-up left Marciano threw at Walcott after the champion had already knocked the challenger stiff with a single short right—"He trun it for insurance"; he walks through a mobbed Harlem on the eve of the second Robinson-Turpin fight and speculates about the changes in fashion that would commemorate a Turpin victory: "I could visualize the thousands of shoulders draped in British tweed, and the equal number of feet, now impacted one on another, encased in shoes by Maxwell of Dover Street. In Harlem, fashion follows the brave." He is quite aware that writing about sports is, and always has been, a species of casual sociology.

If the character of Mr. Liebling's observations is traditional, so is the form in which he shapes them. Although he disdainfully writes off Hazlitt as a dilettante of the "fancy," Mr. Liebling's essays inevitably tend to resemble Hazlitt's "The Fight," the classic of the genre. First he gives us the prelude to the fight, the journey to the arena and the conversation of the fight crowd—its sentiments, predictions, and peculiarities. Then there is the fight itself, in which the behavior of the crowd is, for literary purposes, practically as interesting as that of the principals. Finally, there is the aftermath of the fight, the party or refection, analyses by ringside experts, and the journey home.

THE studied informality of Mr. Liebling's manner is calculated to minimize his perceptiveness, to make his essays seem less "written," but his subject is unyielding, and *The Sweet Science* is of necessity a highly

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STEVEN MARCUS, who here reviews A. J. Liebling's *The Sweet Science* (Viking, 320 pp., $3.95) has recently been discharged from the army and is now teaching in the English department at Columbia. A steady contributor to COMMENTARY, Mr. Marcus has also written on literature and popular culture for *Partisan Review.* His most recent previous appearance in these pages was in October 1954 with "Mount Everest and the British National Spirit."

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"written" book. Fights and fight crowds are dismayingly like all other fights and fight crowds, and anyone who writes about them must be prepared to press very hard upon whatever minutiae of difference he can discover. When Mr. Liebling runs across something unusual or out of the way, he pauses, digresses leisurely, and describes it in extremely florid and stylized language. Here is his account of the death march toward a beer counter on the night of the Robinson-Maxim fight:

> Our line inched along toward a kind of Storm Trooper with a head like a pink egg. Rivulets of sweat poured from the watershed of his cranium, and his face appeared behind a spray, like a bronze Triton's in a fountain.

The same hypertrophy of style marks his occasional technical discussions:

> There are plenty of tall, skinny kids, but few of them are fighters, because the tubular torso of the asthenic male renders him peculiarly vulnerable to pounding in the middle. His higher center of gravity is a disadvantage in the ring, permitting the other boy to spin him like the lady in a ballroom-dancing act, and his swan-like neck is an overextended line of neural communication, allowing him to be knocked out by a tap that would hardly jog the rudimentary mental processes of a bull-necked lad.

This is fancy language indeed, and if Mr. Liebling were not writing about an enterprise so degraded as professional fighting, such excursions into belle-lettristic extravagance would seem forced and inane. However, it is always a good trick to render something into language which seems utterly inappropriate to it, and Mr. Liebling often makes a fight sound like warfare in Heaven precisely because he knows his readers will be amused by the absurdity of the contrast between style and subject.

Mr. Liebling appears to suspect that boxing no longer offers enough intrinsic interest to stand by itself, and so, in addition to style, he depends upon a constant and annoying use of analogy. In every one of his essays the name of Pierce Egan figures centrally. Egan is cited, quoted, referred to, deferred to, and generally used as a touchstone for Mr. Liebling's notions about the state of contemporary boxing. Mr. Liebling seeks a tradition to which he can assimilate his efforts, and in Egan, the Herodotus of Regency boxing, he believes he has found it. By using Egan's quaint "flash" terminology, calling modern pluggers "coves," viewing all of contemporary American boxing as if it were continuous with a tradition which quietly died one hundred and twenty years ago, Mr. Liebling intends to imbue his subject with a class, a tone, and a magnetism it no longer possesses. But what Mr. Liebling ultimately and unintentionally manages to demonstrate is how out of place and anachronistic the sport has become; for the circumstances which created the forty years of boxing's Golden Age in England are just those which, except for the briefest period, never existed here. Beneath Mr. Liebling's impeccable sophistication lurks a typical and an incorrigible American ingenuousness about history and the uses to which it can be put.

BOXING's Homeric era began in England in 1788 and ended in the late 1820's. It flourished during the height of the English conservative reaction to the French Revolution, and it came to an end with the social changes that accompanied the mass agitation for Parliamentary reform. During the 18th century the population of the great English cities had doubled, and a large industrial working class had been extruded from off the land—fighters were, by and large, recruited from the urban lower classes, and the sudden increased popularity of the sport was one of the minor results of those myriad developments which had created a great reserve of propertyless labor in the cities. Since the fashionable social life of the age was characterized by the activities of George, Prince of Wales, Regent and King, and his aristocratic companions, professional boxing acquired its strongest impetus when aristocracy began to patronize it. The Regent led the way. At the famous fight between Mendoza and Humphries, the Prince, a Mendoza backer, sat wrapped in furs in his open carriage in the rain, corpulent, grumpy, suffering from chronic nosebleed, engrossed by the bloody spectacle. Enterprising young fighters became fixtures in many of the patrician households. Pugilists like John Jackson opened expensive salons at which members of the upper classes took boxing lessons. Byron came up to Cambridge with

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a boxing coach—as well as a bear and a monkey—in his entourage. The aristocracy, in the period when its private life was first being converted into public property, established a connection with the raffish and often criminal classes of the nation which gave boxing a license and a vogue it has never commanded since.

Mr. Liebling uses Egan to lend a kind of quaint gentility to the drab scene of contemporary pugilism. Yet Egan himself—if one bothers to read him—was anything but quaint or genteel. He was hardly even "flash" or *chic*. Egan was a rather thoroughgoing vulgarian, a toady, a semi-literate penny-a-liner, and a charming, cadging hanger-on to the influential. His career was also distinguished by a number of questionable episodes. On the other hand, so generally accepted was the fact of upper-class sponsorship of fighting that Egan could presume to speak as one of the Prince's mouthpieces, and nothing is more amusing than to read one of his bombastic, cringing dedications—the one in *Every Gentleman's Manual* is a good example—in which, with all the servility of a "free-born Englishman," he lauds some nobleman until the meretricious periods of his Grub Street style seem to reel with nausea. Yet Mr. Liebling takes Egan at his own valuation and regards him as superior to the trade he advertised and the pugs he puffed—he is introduced into the pages of *The Sweet Science* as the venerable, almost ducal, household god of the "fistic fraternity." For to Mr. Liebling, Egan is tradition, and tradition means class and fashion and privilege, and those things are always preferable in retrospect to whatever vestiges of them may exist now.

In America there has been only one period in which the arrangements of society resembled those of the Regency—the era of Prohibition. It is no accident, I think, that that decade is universally considered our Golden Age of boxing (as well as sport in general). Mr. Liebling thinks this a mistake, because we have better fighters in most weights now. But he misses the point, for the great age of a sport owes much of its greatness to the quality of its sponsorship; and only during Prohibition, when the upper classes in America were perforce dependent on shady characters and racketeers —and thereby promoted a connection which conferred a certain prestige upon the latter —did boxing command anything like the general interest and attraction that it did in England at the end of the 18th century. Professional fighting has always been embarrassed by its propinquity to the criminal, and it has been only during those infrequent periods of culture when for some reason the criminal penetrates and is accepted into the respectable classes of society that boxing has been able to achieve a kind of stylishness and status in itself.

There is, however, another important reason why prize-fighting found its richest expression in the Regency and not later. In the England of that time public life was essentially brutal, and the upper classes codified that brutality and sanctioned it as a part of their own personal habits. Boxing itself was nakedly savage, half-wrestling, half-gouging, bare knuckles all the way, the rules prohibiting almost nothing except falling without being hit. Other favorite English sports were bull- and bear-baiting, and dog and cock fighting. Public floggings and hangings were regular occasions for sociability, as were duels with rapiers and pistols. The English upper classes were not simply inured to this barbarity; they were confirmed in its advantages. When Dr. Keate was appointed headmaster of Eton in 1809, he addressed his young charges with genteel typicality: "Now boys, be pure in heart! For if not, I'll flog you until you are!" Not until forty years later, when public opinion had come to realize that the balance of power and influence now lay in the hands of the manufacturing, reforming, and evangelizing classes, did the Regency paradigm of a gentleman really cease to be emulated.

Public life in America has never been characterized by this sort of institutionalized brutality. We have had no aristocracy, degenerate or otherwise, and almost all of our established communities have traditionally professed middle-class ideals. The principles of compromise and moderation, and an aversion to violence as a way of settling things or even as a mode of expression, have been among the chief historical pieties of our society. To be sure, American history is full of violent episodes and, unlike the English, we have been unable to tame violence in private life. But this is probably

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because we have never found respectable public institutions for expressing it.

There has never been, I think, a nation so sensitive to its own violent possibilities as America. The public consciousness seems periodically to revolve on the axes of violent images; nothing stimulates us more readily than the idea of the racist mob, the gang of juvenile criminals, the chance of *our* dropping an atom bomb on someone else—these possibilities provoke us more deeply than the Communists ever did, for we have implicated ourselves in them. Our increased fear of our own violent capacities, combined with our rudimentary means of dealing with them, have, I believe, contributed to the decline of boxing as a "sweet science," despite its having been domesticated by television. There are few educated American men these days who do not enjoy watching a fight and who do not at the same time feel slightly equivocal about that enjoyment. We suspect that movies like *The Set Up* or *The Harder They Fall* really tell us more about fighting than Mr. Liebling's entertaining and sympathetic accounts. When we see those sickening shots of swollen eyes and mangled noses and hear the mob baying for blood we feel that something in us we would rather not know about is being probed and stigmatized, and we wince, and then relax into the uneasy complacency which is muckraking's customary reward to its approvers.

MR. LIEBLING does not deal with this night-side of our relation to boxing, but I think he is aware of it, and his writing often suffers in proportion to his neglect of it. He is occasionally bothered by the young hoodlums who attend the fights and swarm over other people's seats, but he would rather remember the Regency or talk with the trainers, themselves relics of another time. This effort to avoid the unpleasant is what also seems to incline him to consider boxing in the most abstruse and literary fashion, and sometimes it even provokes confusion. The most accomplished essay in *The Sweet Science* is called "Ahab and Nemesis," Mr. Liebling's report of the Archie Moore-Rocky Marciano fight. Like most of us, Mr. Liebling has great admiration for Moore's style and finesse, and he imagines him as an intellectual, artistic Ahab meeting his doom in Moby Dick Marciano, a force of nature, proof against intellect and science. He also compares Moore to Don Giovanni and Sisyphus. After the fight Mr. Liebling walks to a cafeteria on 167th Street:

> I got my tea and a smoked-salmon sandwich on a soft onion roll at the counter and made my way to a table, where I found myself between two young policemen who were talking about why Walt Disney has never attempted a screen version of Kafka's "Metamorphosis." As I did not feel qualified to join in that one, I got out my copy of the official program of the fights and began to read the high-class feature articles as I munched my sandwich.

It is a wonder, but Mr. Liebling seems quite unaware that, in refusing to join in their conversation, he was doing something quite as preposterous as the two young policemen. Yet it seems to me an interesting comment on the state of our attitude toward boxing that someone as acute and knowledgeable as Mr. Liebling has to ignore so sizeable a part of our response to it in order to make it palatable, and that the result of his efforts is an almost vulgar confusion between the literary and the actual. This is the penalty we incur for dealing with any experience in such exclusively literary terms—even if, as in Mr. Liebling's case, doing so permitted him to enjoy boxing and write about it pleasingly. Pierce Egan, scamp that he was, would have known that the only thing more odd than a fighter writing poetry or a policeman discussing Kafka is a writer disavowing his credentials in sparkling prose.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

SCIENCE, IDEOLOGY, AND DIALOGUE

The Amsterdam Sociological Congress

NORMAN BIRNBAUM

THE World Congress of Sociology, which met late in August of this year in Amsterdam, if it did nothing else, may have shocked some of the participating sociologists into practicing their discipline on themselves. The Congress began as a venture in science. It developed into a conflict of ideology. The presence of forty representatives from the Communist countries made possible an informal encounter between East and West which absorbed and fascinated the sociologists. By contrast, the formal scholarly discussions on the program seemed somewhat tedious and remote—except when illuminated by flashes of political conflict, occasionally conflict within the West itself. All this implied the question of what sociology was: a science objective and neutral or one affected by social conflict.

The Congress provided the setting for more than an encounter: its theme, "Social Change in the 20th Century," and the claims of sociology to depict society entire, allowed a dialogue between Communist social thinkers and their Western colleagues to open. The conversation started in a faltering and partial way, and the Soviet Russians, as distinct from some of their satellites, had no part in it. A generation of Stalinism had done its work: the Russians at Amsterdam could only be described, in one observer's words, as Neanderthalers. But the Czechs, East Germans, and Poles were quite capable of talking to the rest of us, and were obviously delighted at the opportunity to do so. They belonged, culturally, to the West—as did indeed the old Russian intelligentsia and the Bolsheviks before Stalinism.

Why did we fail to establish contact with the Russians? Sociology as such is proscribed in the Soviet Union. The mixed bunch of official philosophers, philosopher-officials, economists, and publicists who came to the Congress had no acquaintance with the discipline. But they would have been equally lost in their own fields. Social science can develop on a Marxist basis and Marxists have done and are doing useful work in a number of countries, if generally not under Marxist dictatorships. The Russians have no social science, Marxist or otherwise. They have, instead, an ideology which they reiterate upon every occasion.

The encounter with the Russians mostly took the form of collision. But the Czechs, East Germans, and Poles sought out the Westerners and ignored, almost ostentatiously, the Russians. And the whole process was both complicated and facilitated by the fact that some of the Western sociologists present, most notably a number of French and Italians, were themselves Communists, fellow-travelers, or left socialists. Also, a strong Yugoslav delegation was present, and the Yugoslavs are exceeding!, experienced in dialogues of all kinds with all camps. The lines were fluid, so fluid at times that many of the participants had to acknowledge, in one way or another, contradictions

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NORMAN BIRNBAUM's report on last summer's World Congress of Sociology in Amsterdam reveals at first hand some of the intellectual unrest that only a few months later was to contribute to the Polish defiance of the Kremlin and the Hungarian revolution. Mr. Birnbaum was born in New York City in 1926 and studied at Williams College and Harvard University, where he taught for a time. He now teaches sociology at the London School of Economics and Political Science. This is his first appearance in COMMENTARY.

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within their own camps and often found themselves more in agreement with their nominal opponents than with their allies.

Whether polemic or sympathetic exchange, all this dialogue was highly stimulating. But it also carried a lesson. The Amsterdam meetings showed, in a way that the more abstract discussions of the Congress for Cultural Freedom cannot, what the consequences are of political limitations on social inquiry. It dramatized the intellectual utility of freedom.

But the meetings may also have shown that Western sociologists do not invariably make the best use of their freedom. They were divided, at Amsterdam as elsewhere, by a number of conflicts over approach and value. Such conflicts are not necessarily bad; social science, in fact, may thrive on them. But they ought to be faced and explored, and many of the Westerners at Amsterdam seemed unready to do so. We heard the usual arguments, of course, about the scope and methods of sociology. (Henri Poincaré, the mathematician and philosopher of science, once remarked that sociologists were always writing treatises on methods they were scrupulously careful never to apply.) But the disputants, by and large, ignored a fact under their very eyes: the fact that a good many of the Westerners at Amsterdam were, *as sociologists,* relatively uninterested in the dialogue with the East and in the central political experience of our time. As citizens, of course, they were glad to listen. But as social scientists, they remained curiously uninvolved.

Those in the West who took the initiative in the conversations with the East were, philosophically, highly assorted. There were Catholics, existentialists, liberals; and in great numbers, Marxists, neo-Marxists, ex-Marxists. Politically, the divergences were fewer: the "democratic left" of a number of countries was much in evidence. And all those eager for conversation with the East seemed to share the view that sociology's scientific work begins, as paradoxical as it sounds, only in historical urgency and political commitment. Before you can describe history objectively, they held, you had to live in it. Many of their colleagues took the opposite view: that sociology was a science like any other, and that their own involvement in its subject matter was of small account. Perhaps my own sympathies mislead me, but I have the impression that the pallid papers at Amsterdam came from this latter group. Faced with the theme "Social Change in the 20th Century," they dropped an iron curtain of their own across their desks, and separated their political concerns from their scientific interests.

Even the locale of the Congress had political implications for those who looked about them. Not only is Amsterdam a charming city: its history reminds us of the historical effectiveness of bourgeois democracy. The Netherlands today is a free society which has obtained a welfare state while learning to live amid considerable political and social tension. During the Congress, in fact, the country was undergoing a cabinet crisis. The building in which the Congress met had its own historical associations; now called the Royal Institute for the Tropics, it was still known to streetcar conductors and hotel porters as the "Colonial Institute."

The formal organization of the Congress was not entirely conducive to conversation, whether between East and West or anyone else. There were too many plenary sessions: a conversation among six hundred scholars is—perhaps luckily—impossible. And the smaller working groups into which the plenary sessions dissolved were often preempted by professors suffering from a common occupational ailment: an over estimation of the importance of their own words. But Dutch hospitality was immense and there was a large number of receptions. And the sidewalk cafés and Oriental restaurants in which Amsterdam abounds provided other opportunities for talk.

And it was talk that interested most of the delegates. Unlike scholarly gatherings in the United States, European and international meetings are not academic track meets with jobs and research grants as the prizes. The hunt for prestige, of course, is not absent from international congresses, and scholars outside the United States are no less eager than their American colleagues for its tangible benefits. But academic entrepreneurship abroad is more subtly done, more disguised, while the younger men have little to occupy them beside their immediate tasks, since jobs and grants are so few anyhow.

Talk, however, requires language. French and English were the official Congress languages, but German was more useful in dealing with most of the East Europeans. The worst linguists at the Congress were not the Americans, British, or French (most of whom seemed to assume that God had spoken to

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Adam in their own tongue) but the Russians. The old Russian intelligentsia was at home in French and German; their Stalinist successors overworked their interpreters.

Conversation began over the formal papers. These were uneven in quality and the arrangements for discussion were cumbersome, but they were the first things the delegates had to talk about. The papers covered an astonishing variety of topics. Opening my program at random, I found "Changes in Family Structure in the Baltic Islands," "The Working Class in the British Social Structure," "Some Problems of Rural Collective Settlements in Indonesia." Economic organization, the distribution of property, class structure, family systems, education, agricultural tenure—these were the main themes on the program. Politics as such was surprisingly absent, despite the recent revival of interest in political sociology. But as we shall see, it intruded itself quickly enough.

It was in the formal sessions that the delegates first encountered the Communists. The Russian contributions precluded real conversation. Propagandistic tracts, they were written in a tone defiant of contradiction or even question. We were told of the Soviet Union's democratic electoral law, of wide popular participation in political decision, of the equality of individuals before Soviet law—claims not requiring comment. The Soviet speakers referred rarely to problems in their own society, and then usually as "survivals" of the bourgeois era. They hardly cited statistics, and their discussions were so diffuse that they scarcely touched on those spheres in which many were less skeptical of Soviet claims of progress, like education and medicine.

But the Soviet delegation did have some notion of the kind of questions that would really interest their Western colleagues: those dealing with a class system in the "classless" society. This is the kind of thing they prepared: "The equality of citizens, firmly established in the norms of socialist law, does not however mean equalization either of the amount of payment for work or in the fields of needs and everyday capacities, as sometimes ill-informed people imagine. Equality under socialism means equal relation of everyone to the means of production and equal duty on the part of everyone to work according to his or her abilities, and an equal right of all the working people to receive compensation in accordance with their labor. Such a proposition does not exclude any property differences among the citizens of the socialist state or considerable differences in the organization of everyday life and the character of the requirements that are to be met. These property differences result, however, not from the fact that the sources of the citizens' incomes are different, but exclusively and wholly from the fact that the compensation paid is fixed according to quantity and quality of work performed. It is individual work that is the source of income in every case."

It is, of course, nonsense to suppose that a member of the Soviet cabinet, making a decision about the economy, and an ordinary worker—bound to do as told—enjoy "equal relations to the means of production." And if commissar and peasant both live by their work, and not off inherited capital, what may we say of the different advantages they can bestow upon their children? The statement quoted admits the existence of class differences in income and culture in all but name. But it ignores their implications. Yet the paper in which it was contained was about the most honest of all the Soviet contributions, formal and informal, at Amsterdam. The Soviet delegates could not allow themselves to see their society as it was—or at any rate they could not talk about their real perceptions. They did not even have any very advanced techniques for gaining information about their society: their statistics were minimal and fragmentary and they seemed to have done little empirical research.

Soviet ideological fervor provoked some unfortunate reactions from the West. One American professor announced that his researches demonstrated that successful businessmen in America were self-made men, that the American myth of success was substantially correct. This did not attract quite the attention it deserved in view of the fact that everybody else's researches showed quite the opposite. Another American declared that we no longer had a working class, only a "labor force." This attempt to match Soviet skill in altering facts by renaming them was resisted by no less a figure than Talcott Parsons of Harvard.

The satellite delegates were much less bound by ideological straitjackets than the Russians. The Poles' entire appearance foreshadowed, on an intellectual plane, the political explosion in Warsaw in October. They issued

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reports on research into the structure of their society; they brought along non-Marxist professors, who quarreled publicly and privately with their colleagues; they invited Western sociologists to teach and do research in Poland. The Czechs, who were not sociologists, collected bibliographies and books on recent inquiries into Western society. Their questions showed them to be well informed and critical. Even the then Hungarian Minister of Justice, Molnar, who was largely circumspect and silent (and, as if he anticipated the imminent revolution, depressed), said that he had come to renew contacts with "bourgeois science." The East Germans insisted on their pleasure at being in Amsterdam. One of them said that, until recently, Karl Mannheim's books had been *verboten* in his university. Mannheim was, of course, the most brilliant of Weimar Germany's neo-Marxist sociologists. Any Marxist regime but a Stalinist one might have encouraged the study of his work.

The informal contacts at the Congress were, therefore, most illuminating for the Westerners, and possibly for the Communists as well. The Russians were very sociable, an improvement on their reported behavior at congresses even two years ago, but it was difficult to exchange more than pleasantries with them. One of them expressed sheer bewilderment at the frequent references to the "middle classes" in Western papers. "Why aren't the categories 'bourgeoisie' and 'proletariat' good enough?" he asked. "Where do the 'middle classes' come in?" Others answered questions, not hostile or pointed but sheerly factual ones about Soviet society, in highly general, almost formula-like terms. They seemed on the defensive and ill at ease. The French sociologists, however, were reasonably satisfied after a private meeting with the Russians. But I gather that the French did most of the talking.

The Poles, on the other hand, were remarkably frank. Even the Marxists among them (and two of the professors present were members of the Central Committee of the United Workers party, the Polish version of the Communist party) seemed to prefer associating with the Westerners rather than the Russians. And the non-Marxists made no secret of their differences with their colleagues: at a private meeting with an American-British group the Poles argued violently among themselves on the methodology of the social sciences. One of the Polish Communists, and not the least of them, when asked to explain the difference between the behavior of his delegation and the immobility of the Russians, exclaimed: "It's simple. They've had thirty years of it and we only ten."

The Poles were anxious to import Western sociological research techniques—the Marxists simply because of their value as techniques, and the non-Marxists because they see them as an opening for a more critical general sociology. One Marxist professor, who deplored "anecdotal empirical sociology," hoped to combine the measurement of social phenomena with a "reformulated and completed" Marxist theory. The Poles planned to send students to America and Britain (a number are already in France) and they began arranging for academic visits to Poland by Western professors. It would be unfortunate if the only Western visitors they got were social research technicians. However skilled the technicians, they are unlikely to infuse Polish students and professors with a new vision of society to replace the Marxist one.

The Poles were the most active and interesting of the satellites at Amsterdam precisely because they were so free of satellite intellectual characteristics. The Czechs and East Germans were as reasonable and receptive as the Poles in private, but they read no public papers. (One Polish paper, by Professor Ossowski, was the initial sensation of the Congress. Its author, a non-Marxist, analyzed the class structure of the present Communist societies in unadorned terms.) The Bulgarians and Rumanians went around talking about peace and international cooperation. The vice president of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, who accompanied the Minister of Justice, was sufficiently unimpressed by the official company he kept to explain that he was not personally a Marxist.

Of all the Communist delegations, the Yugoslavs were the freest. Unlike many of the Russians, all the Yugoslavs were genuine scholars, at home in sociology even if primarily economists or lawyers. They were Marxists, but they put observed facts into the Marxist vocabulary rather than insisting on the vocabulary and ignoring the facts. And they seemed more varied, more distinctive as personalities than the Russians—although perhaps this impression is the result of a political judgment. They distinguished themselves in the

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two special sessions on Marxism and the interpretation of social change in the 20th century, sessions that were, in many respects, the highlights of the Congress.

These sessions developed because a group of younger French and Italian sociologists wanted to discuss Marxism with their colleagues in general, and with the East Europeans in particular. Their motives were political as well as intellectual. One of the Italians was a Communist (although he publicly told a Russian that in his opinion Stalinism was the work of a social stratum and not of one man), and others were Nenni Socialists. The French intelligentsia, and not least the social scientists, are fascinated with Marxism; this reflects their ambivalence toward the French Communist party. It also reflects the persistence of an indigenously French socialist tradition on which Marx himelf drew. (The French intellectual has been defined as somebody who would not make love to a girl with whose politics he disagreed. That seems exaggerated. But many French intellectuals can simultaneously debate supporting the Communists and speculate as to how many days they personally could survive a Communist seizure of power.)

This group was joined by another, which held that Marxism was a set of hypotheses like any other, even if a remarkably useful one; therefore, if the meeting were not to degenerate into scholasticism, it ought to provide opportunities for a critique of Marxism. This initial divergence of purpose led to some misunderstanding, but it also opened the way for a more stimulating and penetrating discussion than would have been possible had either group monopolized these sessions.

The first meeting, lasting four hours in the most smoke-filled of rooms, was egalitarian, even comradely. Some twenty-five speakers took the floor, unannounced and largely unprepared, for five minutes each. There was confusion and repetition at first, though enlivened by pronounced national differences in rhetoric and style. The French made even the most banal of observations sound like something from Pascal. The Americans clothed logic in casualness. The Southern Europeans were uniformly intense. The Germans, although well represented, were surprisingly silent. Most of the speakers were Westerners, although three Yugoslavs made a great impression. By midnight the discussion had begun to converge on a number of points. At the beginning it was a series of monologues. Later, however, the participants began to talk to each other. What did they say?

Marx had predicted that society would split into two completely antagonistic classes, that an impoverished and humiliated working class would unite to overthrow the exploiting class. But industrial society had developed a new middle class not identical with the exploiting one. The working class was itself internally differentiated and, in the advanced industrial countries, demonstrably richer. Extreme economic differences between the working and middle classes were now gone in these countries. In some, the workers had either become "bourgeois" or accepted bourgeois leadership. The revolution, in other words, had either failed to occur, or had taken forms not foreseen by Marx.

Marx had, further, viewed political power as a simple function of economic power. The state, he claimed, was an executive committee for the bourgeoisie. Yet in our time the state had frequently altered the balance of economic power between the classes to the workers' advantage. And in Soviet Russia, the state itself had become a massive exploiting agency. Also, Marx had written of "alienation," of men's estrangement from the vital and healthy potentialities of their own nature. Alienation, Marx implied, would supply the psychological dynamic for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist society. But alienation has, in our time, produced horrible political movements and not that brotherly commonwealth envisaged by the early socialists and—despite his professed scientific amorality—Marx himself. Finally, both Asiatic and Western speakers asserted that the problem of exploitation had shifted largely to the colonial sphere, where new forms of imperialism required new ways of analysis.

These things were said in a Marxist temper, in the conviction that much in the Marxist method was still viable, and that even Marx's mistakes had been fruitful. Even an anti-Marxist could agree with this last. But some critical voices were raised to ask why, if Marx had made so many concrete mistakes, it was still necessary to take him as anything but a historic figure. No clear answer was really attempted. There was, to be sure, some discussion as to whether Marxism as a method of sociological analysis necessarily entailed accept-

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ance of dialectical materialism as a philosophy. There was also much talk about removing the mythological elements from Marxism. But unfortunately, no one could say why some intellectuals should have made a myth of what was something else in Marx's hands.

ALL of this was on a fairly general plane—until more immediate problems made an insistent appearance. A Pole spoke of revising Marxist—by which he meant Stalinist—analyses of contemporary society. All that he could propose was that we should now attribute Nazism to the "petty bourgeoisie" rather than to the "monopoly capitalists." He added that the Polish Communists were now willing to accept the "honorable capitulation" of the Polish "kulaks," and sat down. (The more "flexible" of the Polish Marxists had avoided these sessions, intimating that they did not want to come into direct conflict with the Russians. But the speaker showed that not all Poles were flexible.) The Yugoslavs caused a stir by insisting that even nominally socialistic states could behave imperialistically toward other socialist states, and they argued that it was the task of Marxists to prevent the development of new forms of domination imposed in the name of socialism. Their references were clear—yet the Russian speaker referred later to the "valuable" comments of the Yugoslavs.

An American, Professor S. M. Lipset (a COMMENTARY contributor) described Stalinism as simply a mode of enforced industrialization. Lipset recalled the controversy over industrialization in the Soviet Union in the 1920's and he cited the views of both Bukharin and Trotsky, important participants in that controversy. The Russian speaker later declared that his delegation "did not find it necessary" to enter into discussion with anyone who quoted Bukharin and Trotsky.

Perhaps the Russian—he was editor of the Soviet trade union newspaper *Trud*—really believed that these two old Bolsheviks had been imperialist agents. His reaction was, in any case, a striking reminder of the survival of many of the most repugnant features of Stalinism. He drew a laugh from the audience, involuntarily, by assuring them that he was pleased to see knowledge of Marxism growing outside the Communist countries! He made a gesture, at least, towards real conversation with the West by declaring that there was much "merit" in a question by Professor Georges Friedmann, the distinguished French scholar who was elected President of the International Sociological Association. Friedmann had declared that workers in Russia did subordinate and laborious work, like workers everywhere; did this not affect their attitudes even in a "socialist" society? The Russian speaker, despite his cordiality, did not answer the question.

The delegates left the session exhausted but satisfied. The Yugoslavs were nearly everybody's heroes. They seemed to be those Marxists without myth demanded by the speakers. And they talked the language of democratic and utopian socialism. Nobody mentioned Djilas and Dedijer, who had been persecuted for trying to persuade the Yugoslav Communist party to pursue those goals.* In general, that evening, people spoke softly.

A SECOND meeting provided much more open conflict. There were four speakers: Professor Raymond Aron of Paris, S. M. Lipset, the Hungarian Justice Minister, Molnar, and a Yugoslav law professor, Rudolph Legradic. Lipset made a reference to the view that industrial development might have taken place in Russia even if the Czarist regime had continued. This infuriated the Russian spokesman, who had returned for more, and he ignored Lipset's real points. One of them, on the Stalinist bureaucracy, was made later by an Italian Communist and found at least nominal acceptance by the Russian. The Yugoslav had, indeed, opened the evening with a discourse on the dangers of bureaucracy and an astonishingly utopian demand for the elimination of the state.

Aron began by remarking that a dialogue between East and West was desirable, and that it might be easier if the East were to stop jailing and executing opponents. He declared that Western Europe and America were now welfare societies and had surpassed Soviet Russia in providing for their members—at infinitely less human and moral cost. The Russian, in his reply, rightly recalled his country's late start and wartime losses. The rest of Aron's points escaped him.

Molnar's manner was singular. His very brief statement fell into two distinct parts. He

*Djilas was arrested in Belgrade last month following publication of an article by him in the *New Leader* criticizing the Yugoslav Communists for failing to support the Hungarian revolution.—ED.

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began by saying that a superficial look at Communist countries might lead us to suppose that they were characterized by unequal control of the means of production, by a dictatorship not of but over the proletariat. That would be a mistake, he declared, and in the second half of his talk he told us that behind this deceptive and depressing mask lay the true and just face of social revolution. Some people had the impression that he himself nevertheless inclined privately towards the first view. Or perhaps he was simply looking at things dialectically: he did tell Aron to read Hegel.

Thus the second session on Marxism left the sphere of abstractions and dealt in hard and disputed realities. It was not alone ideas that were argued about, but the actual structure of human society. And the arguments were political, about the uses to which power was being put. This underscored the remoteness of a good deal of the Congress program. In the last analysis, knowledge about society—or the refusal of such knowledge—is something we need in order to attain political aims. And, quite apart from our aims, politics is frequently a decisive category of change in social structure.

What began, then, as detached intellectual analysis became a political controversy. And the sociologists, despite their theoretical structures and research techniques, found themselves arguing in the same terms as everybody else, even if they had an acuter sense of the social limitations on political decision. It is now, perhaps, a bit clearer why many Western sociologists retain an interest in Marxism despite Marx's mistakes. For Marxism treats society in terms historical in conception and political in application. And it was a political contact with history that they were seeking, a search which led them into the dialogue with the East.

The Amsterdam Congress, then, gave rise to a number of reflections—many of them bearing on the political relevance of social science both in the West and in the Communist countries. Our conversations with our Communist colleagues have now been overshadowed by the dramatic and moving events in Poland and Hungary (and by the time this appears, perhaps elsewhere as well). We thought we were glimpsing a world in motion. Actually, it was a world about to explode. The mixed despair and hope with which our colleagues talked showed us that to them, de-Stalinization was a matter of spiritual life and death. The reactions of an official like Molnar, or of the restive delegates from countries not openly defiant of Stalinism (the Czechs and East Germans), were as instructive—in their own way—as the outspokenness of a man like Professor Hochfeld of Warsaw, who came to Amsterdam in the midst of his parliamentary struggle for socialist democracy.

Our experience at Amsterdam, and the things it foreshadowed, confirmed David Riesman's criticism of the Orwellian exaggeration of the omnipotence of totalitarian rule. Through the blackest period of Stalinism many East European intellectuals, whether Marxist or not, persisted in thinking. The difference between the satellite intellectuals and the Russians, however, was disheartening. It is sobering to recall the Pole's remark on the effects of thirty, as opposed to ten, years of Stalinism.

The immediate evidence available to us at Amsterdam, of course, concerned the fate of social inquiry in the intermediate phase of de-Stalinization. Looking back, we can now see how the forces mobilized about this issue reflected underlying political conflicts. Social inquiry as such was rejected by Stalinism: had not Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin discovered, once and for all, the laws governing social events? As Stalinist controls loosened, the Communist policy-makers were either confused or at odds on allowing the resumption of social inquiry. Some may have thought that non-Marxist or critical Marxist sociologists could be allowed their say, in the expectation that they would gradually die out. But those we met at Amsterdam were busy reproducing themselves, intellectually, by writing and teaching. Then again, social inquiry may prove an indispensable instrument of government. Public opinion surveys and studies of industrial relations, never undertaken by the Stalinists, may be precisely what a Gomulka needs.

A general turn from dogmatic rigidity in social and economic policy in some of the Soviet bloc countries, then, seems to be leading to a renewal of empirical inquiry. But empirical inquiry itself may encourage some Communists to look anew at their assumptions. A good deal of modern Western sociology originated in the effort to grasp the limits of Marxism. A similar large-scale effort in Eastern Europe is still in the future. But at Amsterdam we witnessed stirrings in this direction, and recent political events (themselves partly the

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result of intellectual dissent) may open new perspectives. The anxieties of the Stalinist diehards are easy enough to understand. Once permitted in a limited way, inquiry of this sort can break all bounds.

For the present, we can expect a pronounced increase in concrete research programs in Eastern Europe. The Poles began before Gomulka's return, the Czechs and East Germans are in contact with the Poles, and the Yugoslav experience fits this pattern. (One Yugoslav at Amsterdam asked to meet some Western industrial sociologists. I told him that many of us in the West thought that some of our industrial research was ideologically biased. His answer was: "I know ideology when I see it: it's the techniques and the facts I want.") The Easterners are turning to the West for scientific assistance and collaboration. What attitude ought Western social scientists, and intellectuals generally, adopt to these requests?

It is practically our duty, I think, to accede to them. Technical issues are hard to distinguish from substantive ones. We ought to be clear that such collaboration is a political act. But unless, in the face of all recent evidence, we cling to a demonological image of the Communist regimes, we can proceed with a good conscience. Communist opinion in East Europe is far from monolithic. The recent struggles in these countries began when the Communist intellectuals seized upon the Khrushchev speech to open an attack on totalitarianism on many fronts. Many of the people we help will have taken considerable risks. Many others, in countries that have yet to go as far, are prepared to do so. Scholarly collaboration is, at once, the repayment of a debt of honor to those who have won their first battles and a gesture of encouragement to those who may tomorrow find themselves in desperate struggle.

The most important thing we can do is simple enough. It is to keep talking, to keep open our lines of intellectual communication with the East. And conversation may affect those who listen to it as well as those who participate in it. It was noticeable at Amsterdam that the Western Communists seemed to feel themselves closer to their Western colleagues than to their Soviet comrades—especially after the Soviet speeches.

It would be futile, of course, to expect very much in the way of conversation from Stalin's professors. The "thaw" in Russia has yet to melt any number of icebergs in the social sciences. But conversation with Stalin's professors may be the price for the chance to talk to their students, who have noticed their teachers' discomfiture. (The old Bolshevik intellectuals who came to the Congress from Moscow were a good deal more accessible than their middle-aged colleagues, and the rising generation ought to be more accessible still.) And if a certain amount of tact is the price for talking with the Russians at all, then it may be well to consider paying it. "Tactlessness," of course, may also bring gains and it may be a gain to upset a Soviet ideologue—not least to the ideologue himelf.

TOTALITARIAN societies repress their own social conflicts, or their leaders may invent pseudo-conflicts to avoid the real ones. In any case, no social science is possible. In free societies, the fact that conflicts are not forcibly repressed allows them to be expressed in social science itself. But the Western social scientist, in these conditions, may find it difficult to see things as they really are. He may mistake an issue involving the fundamental nature and freedom of social science for a professional difference over methods and approach. Both Eastern and Western sociologists agreed at Amsterdam that there were objective laws governing social life. The Communists claim to have discovered them in Marxism. This claim, in Stalinist hands, became an ideological justification for exploitation and tyranny. The resistance of the Stalinists to empirical inquiry (a resistance which would have been repugnant to Marx himself) is of course due to their fear of disproof of their claim. Social inquiry, under Stalinism, was really something subversive.

But what about Western claims? Many Westerners at Amsterdam were themselves not free of ideology. It took the form of supposing that the laws governing social life lie very near the surface, just awaiting discovery. One more inquiry (and one more grant) and there they'd be—lacking only suitably simplified packaging for freshman courses. Part of this is simply a professional attitude: sociologists need to convince themselves, and university administrators, that they really are entirely distinct from economists, historians, political scientists, and, above all, philosophers. But something else was at work.

The notion that we can begin our search

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for the laws of social life just anywhere rejects a good many lessons, of which the Amsterdam Congress was only the latest. A sociology that proceeds from one randomly chosen inquiry to another may be fleeing social conflict. Our task is to see our society as a whole. Inquiries subversive in the East may in the West be simply evasive. Amsterdam, then, may have reminded some of the Westerners of the problem of significance in their work. It may have turned them away from excessive preoccupation with the model of the physical sciences. A nominally free social science that is unaware of its roots in conflict may remain chained. The very measure of the strength of social science may lie in the way it diagnoses specific social conflicts which are the essence of the society in which it functions. Our frank admission of uncertainty may be our strongest weapon in the attempt to enlarge the dialogue with those minds in the East now struggling for their freedom.

Postscript. The tragic and brutal destruction of the Hungarian revolution by the Red Army demands a melancholy postscript. Professors and students alike were conspicuous in the local revolutionary committees. Organized student groups fought alongside the army and the workers' militia in the streets and, according to the last despairing broadcasts from Hungary, fought to the end. Public criticism of Stalinism in Rakosi's Hungary began, we may recall, with pronouncements by the Budapest intellectuals. And the Academy of Sciences used Hungary's few brief days of freedom to appeal to scholarly bodies elsewhere for aid. Molnar, meanwhile, has disappeared: he was a member neither of Nagy's national front government nor of Kadar's puppet regime.

SONNET

YEHUDA AMICHAI

THE thoughts came to him like long lines of freight,
a convoy of supplies before the battle.
They came to him in order, one by one,
and while he was unloading them, he thought

them out in sentences, in neat array.
The shots were commas, full stops, dots above
the i's. The earth exploded just when they
had crusted silently my wounds of love.

And in the spring, he felt his fingers tingle,
like branches of a tree, with blossoming,
and he prepared for fruit. But in the fall,

twice wounded in his legs, twisting, he fell
to earth; like Balaam, falling, could foretell
the story of my days, and sang the blessing.

YEHUDA AMICHAI, a leading young poet of Israel, came to that country in 1936 from Germany (where he was born in 1924). He has published one volume of verse, *Achshav U-v'yamim Ha-acherim* ("Now and in the Other Days"). The sonnet we print was translated from the Hebrew by Robert Friend of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Judaism for the Doubters

To the Editor of Commentary:

I was disappointed in the appraisal Stanley Edgar Hyman gave of David Daiches's views ("The 'Two Worlds' of David Daiches," November). Mr. Daiches may well be the most articulate of the many thoughtful, questioning Jews who reject Orthodoxy and can find no replacement for it within Judaism. As one who has tussled with his conscience and love for his parents as against the needs of his clear mind and honest feelings, he has, in his writings on the subject, performed a valuable service for the rest of us doubters. He has thrown wide open the question: can Judaism be remodeled to fill the needs of the present?

It is indeed unfortunate that Jewish critics often regard him and others who stir up iconoclastic debate about Wilderness and Ghetto Judaism as traitors, cowards, even brutes. Quite the contrary! Out of such groping may well come the solid Judaism of the future, attracting the agnostics of today, and carrying the core of our tradition into centuries which find the Orthodox remnant merely an item, along with the Amish, on tourists' lists.

I have ceased to be surprised at the comments about Judaism one hears even from so-called Orthodox, *shul*-going Jews. One of these said, in topping my plea for a more functional Judaism, "What we really need today is NO religion . . . just some common sense!" Why then does he observe every jot and tittle of ritual? Stanley Edgar Hyman is probably right in calling him merely an ancestor-worshipper.

Isn't it about time that those who really have the future of Judaism at heart—not just their own future, their jobs, their habits, their fears, their laziness—sit down, as though this were the beginning of time, and chart a religion, simple and strong as Judaism, with real meaning for today? I was shocked to realize that I'm waiting for Colin Wilson's next book because he has promised to propose a new faith for those who agree that no current religion is adequate to the present! My shock subsided a bit, however, when I tried to imagine what he'd come up with and found it running very much along the lines of my sort of Judaism!

May I, merely in the hope of getting others to think the matter through, share the feeling I have about our religion and the attitudes about it I have imparted to my children? For rapport with you who may read this may I add that I believe I'm very much like you: a person of good education, good character, good deeds, I read a lot, think a lot, talk a lot, laugh a lot, feel a lot, and yes—cry, too. Like you.

Starting from scratch then, here's my position on religion, as I might outline it to my children:

1. Everyone needs a Philosophy, a Way of Life, a Code to Live By. This serves you throughout life both as a Guide and a source of Comfort.
2. Religion offers such a Way of Life.
3. You were born into the Jewish Religion.
4. The Jewish Religion offers such a Way of Life and, in addition, welcomes you into the fold of an old and glorious tradition.
5. There are other religions which, because of their numbers and power, may be more convenient to follow. However, there are two important reasons for clinging to your own: pride of birth and ancestry, and the fact that Judaism has everything any other religion can offer, and more!
6. Within the fold of Judaism you can pick and choose among the prayers and rituals until you evolve (with the help of a progressive rabbi and other questing young people like yourselves) a form of our faith which has meaning for you, sustains you, answers your doubts. Judaism is a simple, uncluttered faith. To implement it, a few basic rituals may well suffice . . . lighting of candles, observance of holidays, etc. . . . to give us a feeling of closeness and oneness and distinctiveness.

I might add here, this "manifesto" may be bearing fruit. One daughter, married and living in a small community, is part of a group of young-marrieds who are sharing in the building of a new Reform congregation . . . almost tailor-made to their needs: family nights, nice nostalgic singing, sermons on current topics, interfaith camaraderie. Reform or not, they cling to the warm and meaningful

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core of Jewish life. They believe firmly, for example, in Bar Mitzvah!

ALMA D. KAPLAN

New York City

Justice Holmes & the Jews

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Many of your readers must have been astonished by Edmund Wilson's "Notes on Gentile Pro-Semitism" in your October issue. It would almost appear that the more eminent the New Englander the more ardent the effort to claim some strain of Jewish blood. To Lowell and Chapman, I am able to add Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. Shortly before Holmes's death, he was visited by his friend Morris R. Cohen. I quote from a letter sent to me by Professor Cohen:

"I called on him and the conversation turned to Hitlerism. I told him that a great many people would be keen to have him, the representative of traditional American liberalism, express his view of that menace. To this he replied: 'Why should I condemn anything in this world when I am no longer in it?' Then pausing a while he said: 'Still, it seems to me crazy. Doesn't it seem so to you? Why, my ancestors the Wendells were Jews. They were originally the Vondells who came from Holland.' "

When I called this letter to the attention of a biographer of Holmes, a member of the Harvard Law School faculty, he replied, as I recall, that this "affectation" was not unusual in certain New England circles.

Surely this is a curious phenomenon. Was Holmes joking? Is it true? Or could it be an affectation? I wonder what Mr. Wilson would make of Holmes's "Jewishness."

BERYL HAROLD LEVY

New York City

Mr. Lehrman Prophesies

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Just how many people have drawn your attention to Mr. Hal Lehrman's "prophetic" anecdote in his article "Three Weeks in Cairo," in your issue of last February? I refer to his remark, "In Cairo salons I even heard lugubrious speculations that the Soviet arms shipments endanger Egypt: It only leaves more stuff around for Israelis to capture."

In Israel at that time, shortly after a punitive raid, when the troops brought back a few lorries and guns, the current wisecrack was: Question: Who is the biggest donor to the Keren Magen (Arms Fund)? Answer: The Egyptian army. Today it has proven true.

Could you please convey to Mr. Lehrman my sincerest congratulations and admiration for a brilliant piece of reporting.

M. T. GOODMAN

Jerusalem, Israel

Names, Fine & Otherwise

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his interesting article on "Jewish Surnames Through the Ages," (September), Dr. Benzion C. Kaganoff seems to have been slightly mistaken about the not so fine-sounding names Jews sometimes happened to be stuck with. There is nothing wrong with the family name of Salz (salt) and its derivates, such as Salzmann and Salzer; Nierenstein seems to be related to the famous wine-producing village of Nierstein in the Rhineland; Garfunkel has nothing to do with carbuncles, but has its source in the ancient German word *Karfunkel* or *Karfunkelstein,* meaning diamond. The Gorfinkels, Finkelsteins, and Finkels actually belong to the type of "fine-sounding" names in the "diamond" group, *viz:* Edelstein, Saphir, Diamant, and Burla.

As to ugly-sounding Jewish names, some examples are Affenkraut (monkey weed), Verderber (despoiler), and Borgenicht (doesn't borrow), all of which occur in fact—I came across them twenty-six years ago in Leipzig.

Finally, during the name-adoption period, some Jewish families in Germany quite deliberately adopted Hebrew surnames, such as Eldod, Japhet, and Josaphat, thus refusing to become assimilated even in their family names!

PEREZ TURA

Givataim, Israel

The Isaac Rosenfeld Fund

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Friends of the late Isaac Rosenfeld are trying to collect enough money to insure the higher education of his children. Those who knew him or were taught by him or read his work, and who wish to make a contribution, are asked to send it in the form of a check made out to Russell M. Cooper, Treasurer, and mailed to Dean Russell M. Cooper, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 14, Minnesota.

SAUL BELLOW
RUSSELL M. COOPER
RALPH G. ROSS
ALLEN TATE

(Committee for the Isaac Rosenfeld Fund)
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minn.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Trivia and History

THE CRUCIAL DECADE: AMERICA 1945-1955. By ERIC F. GOLDMAN. Knopf. 298 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by IRVING KRISTOL

"STRANGE," Thomas Carlyle noted sarcastically apropos Mary Queen of Scots and her English historians, "that a man should think he was writing the history of a nation while he is chronicling the amours of a wanton young woman. . . ." Not so strange, really, since there is a demonstrable connection between those amours and the course of English and Scottish history. Like all innovators, Carlyle was something less than fair to those who had gone before him. Because he was so sensitive to the larger impersonal forces that move men and events, he overlooked the possibility that, in other times and other places, men and events were moved by smaller and more familiar impulsions; because he saw The People preempt the stage in his own day, he was inclined to forget that in earlier performances The People were only too often a dumb audience. Fundamentally, however, and despite his strident unfairness, he was in the right. The new ways of writing history in the 19th century were a positive gain: whether the people were just people, or whether they were The People, they were miscast in any but the leading roles. In retrospect, one could plainly see that the trivial and fickle passions of Mary counted for less than the shifts in religious opinion, in habits of life, in manners of work and play, of her inarticulate subjects. And so the world was prepared for Macaulay, and for the study of history as we understand it today:

"I should very imperfectly execute the task which I have undertaken if I were merely to treat of battles and sieges, of the rise and fall of administrations . . . and of debates in Parliament. It will be my endeavor to relate the history of the people as well as the history of the government, to trace the progress of useful and ornamental arts, to describe the rise of religious sects and the changes of literary taste, to portray the manners of successive generations, and not to pass by with neglect even the revolutions which have taken place in dress, furniture, repasts, and public amusements."

But one thing always leads to another. Having brought The People into the theater, the historian was faced with a problem of discipline: the crowd was always on the verge of unpacking their box lunches, turning on the portable radios, and making passes at one another's wives. Such behavior, however amusing, and even when it is behavior by The People, is not quite the stuff that history is made of. The loves of Tom, Dick, and Harry are, if anything, less worthy of the historian's attention than the loves of Mary. The Marxists tried hard to establish one principle of order and relevance in all this commotion, by dividing the group into classes and assigning them distinct roles; but everyone was soon bored and either forgot their lines or simply drifted away. Other earnest scholars tried other methods, more or less coercive, with not much more or less success. It was all exceedingly difficult: if one assumed that everyday life, as distinct from the high life of politics, was the final substance beneath the trend of events, then one was in danger of being overwhelmed by all the trivia of everyday life, and of losing all sense of the significant, the meaningful, the important. For Macaulay, writing in Victorian England, the danger was not so evident, since The People in his day meant, in effect, the various non-political elites, who were manageable in their number and distinct in their activities. But when The People did come to include everybody—well, as Aristotle pointed out long ago, if you seriously want to write the history of everybody you have to write poetry, not history.

The historians have accommodated themselves—resigned themselves, one might say—to this situation in different ways. One is by a mock-Marxism which leads to chapters on "the socio-economic context" or "the popular background" being inserted into what are otherwise

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old-fashioned political narratives. A second way out is to stick with Macaulay—to assume, in other words, that despite appearances and ideology, The People are naturally divided into manageable units (the writers, the inventors, the philosophers, the clergy) and to give a separate chapter to each, distinct from other chapters that deal with war, diplomacy, economics, and general matters of state. This is still the favorite approach of most of our textbooks. A third, and more ambitious, way is to mix freely with the crowd and try for a synthesis of popular journalism and academic history, with the aim of seeing The People whole. This was the route that Mark Sullivan tentatively explored (his eyes glued to a newspaper, however) in *Our Times,* that Frederick Lewis Allen boldly marked out in his *Only Yesterday,* which was jauntily navigated by Robert Graves and Alan Hodge in *The Long Weekend* and by Malcolm Muggeridge in *The 'Thirties,* and down which Eric Goldman now solemnly parades in *The Crucial Decade.*

Frederick Lewis Allen subtitled his book "An *Informal* History of the Nineteen-Twenties," and his preface struck an apologetic (and slightly ironic) note: ". . . I have wondered whether some readers might not be interested and perhaps amused to find events and circumstances which they remember well—which seem to have happened only yesterday—woven into a pattern which at least masquerades as history." Professor Goldman (of Princeton) speaks not of amusement or masquerades: he is a professional historian, author of several indubitable and quite distinguished historical works, and in his preface he writes: "The book is history in the most direct sense of the word—a narrative, written with a careful regard for facts, an attempt to escape partisanship or other bias, an effort to place events in the longer perspective, and [on?] the assumption that the history of man is the story of men."

Professor Goldman's regard for fact is indeed impressive. He was not content with the usual secondary sources, but actually interviewed and entered into correspondence with several dozen of the names that are listed in his index. As a reward for his enterprise, he has come up with many bits of information—about the origins of the Truman Doctrine, of the Marshall Plan, of the American government's decision to intervene in Korea—that are interesting in themselves and for which future historians will be indebted to him. His escape from partisanship is, as one would expect, less impressive. Despite his disclaimer, this is a distinctly partisan book. Professor Goldman's bias is controlled, urbane, and probably congenial to most of his readers, who also vote the Democratic ticket. But it is there, had to be there; to write "objective" contemporary history is about as feasible as writing an objective autobiography, and one can only wonder why Professor Goldman bothered to enter such a disclaimer, which leaves him open to the accusation of disingenuousness.

Far more disturbing than disingenuousness in so worldly an author, however, is the overwhelming impression that what has been accomplished is an exercise in trivialization. In the list of those whom Professor Goldman either interviewed or corresponded with, there is the name of Lauren Bacall. She appears once in the book, on page 18, in the following sentence: "And everybody was glad to meet Harry Truman now, even the movie stars like Lauren Bacall, who came and sat on the top of the piano while [he] played the 'Missouri Waltz.'" One cannot but admire Professor Goldman's attention to detail, while wondering at its application: does it really matter that Miss Bacall sat on the piano? How would the "crucial decade" have been affected if she had merely leaned on it? Unfortunately, such questions are not merely captious, but strike at the root of Professor Goldman's method. He has written, at one and the same time, serious history and frivolous journalism. It is all rather like reading a special supplement of *Time* magazine: every fact has been carefully checked, every incident has been presented in dramatic and readable terms, it is terribly easy to read—and terribly hard to take seriously. Rather than guiding us through the real world, it offers us an escape from it.

What, one wonders, is the point of paying such determined attention to the truth of individual facts when these facts are then going to be used, not to construct some larger truthful picture, but to make a "readable" and chatty story? "Life had prepared Harry Truman for the simple. Life was Jackson County, Missouri, where you grew up nearsighted and the other boys snickered, you went courting Bess Wallach in the big house and her parents tried to get rid of you, you came back from the war to start the haberdashery with Eddie

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Jacobson and the store went broke. But you stuck at it. You kept in mind the simple things . . ." etc., etc.—this is perhaps suitable for a Dos Passosian novel (even if the genre itself is a bit out of date), but is it history or a counterfeit poesy? One trusts Professor Goldman to the extent of not challenging any of the details; but one distrusts his style to the extent of suspecting that *this* was not Harry Truman—because *this* is not any real person, only a quasi-literary creation.

ODDLY enough, Professor Goldman's intentions are serious, not to say honorable. He has a thesis: the "crucial decade" witnessed the culmination of a "Half-Century of Revolution" in domestic affairs which resulted in the welfare state, and the final break with the nationalist-isolationist tradition in foreign affairs. There are, moreover, parts of the book where Professor Goldman writes like an older-fashioned historian—as when he sketches the background of McCarthyism—and here he is both instructive and persuasive. But, on the whole, the preponderance of "snappy" journalism defeats his own purpose: this kind of writing has inherent in it a touch of the sardonic, the satirical, the spoofing. The unimportant is inflated, the significant is demeaned. The population explosion of postwar America, clearly one of the decisive facts of modern history, gets three sentences—half as much as the scandals in "amateur" sports. Three juvenile delinquents in Nahart, Massachusetts, get two paragraphs; Dien Bien Phu gets considerably less. "Local color" is continually elbowing history out.

The sad thing is that, even where Professor Goldman obviously feels deeply about a subject, his method cheapens his sentiments. The three pages he devotes to Jackie Robinson's breaking of the color bar in organized baseball were certainly written from the heart—but they read as if they were written from the *Time* morgue:

"Amid it all, a powerful, lithe Negro was turning the base paths of Ebbets Field into a holy war. . . . Half Barnum and half Billy Sunday, Rickey had decided to defy baseball's ancient color line and sign Robinson to a Brooklyn contract. Now the sensitive, quick-tempered young Negro faced the most brutal kind of contest; this time he had to battle by not battling at all. . . .

"Robinson took his position at first base and more than occasionally players came smashing against him, at times with spikes out; the Negro ground his teeth and said nothing. . . ."

And so on, to ultimate victory for the forces of Tolerance and Democracy. This is "eminently readable" but, in the end, is it Jackie Robinson we have been reading about or Frank Merriwell? In previous decades, the historian was less ambitious, more prosaic, and even more prosy. But he was also less vulgar, less eager to "exploit" his characters—and his readers. Here, for instance, is how Justin McCarthy, in his Victorian multi-volumed and enormously popular *A History of Our Own Times,* recounted another notable victory for human decency:

"It is a fact well worthy of note amid whatever records of court ceremonial and of political change, that a few days after the accession of the Queen, Mr. Montefiore was elected Sheriff of London, the first Jew who had ever been chosen for that office; and that he received knighthood at the hands of her Majesty when she visited the City on the following Lord Mayor's day. He was the first Jew whom royalty had honored in this country since the good old times when royalty was pleased to borrow the Jew's money, or order instead the extraction of his teeth. The expansion of the principle of religious liberty and equality which has been one of the most remarkable characteristics of the reign of Queen Victoria, could hardly have been more becomingly inaugurated than by the compliment which sovereign and city paid to Sir Moses Montefiore."

Dull stuff, in comparison with Professor Goldman. But dignified, too—with a dignity that fits the measure of man rather than the overblown measure of The People.

Memory Uncorrupted

THE FERTILE PLAIN. By ESTHER SALAMAN. The Hogarth Press. London. 344 pp. 15s.

Reviewed by DAN JACOBSON

THE FERTILE PLAIN is the record of the life of a girl who has among her earliest memories the sight of a revolutionary fleeing past her window:

"I can see her now: she ran as if the top of her body wanted to leave the legs behind. Then came a thin woman, and she ducked her head. And now I saw that the men

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who were running after them were hurling large stones at them, and I knew why they were afraid. . . .

"A stout young man was running along the side of the road; his Russian shirt was blown out, as if the wind had got inside and could not get out. . . .

" 'A student. Oh God, his glasses are coming off!' mother cried out behind me."

What strikes one immediately is the simplicity and directness of the eye of the author: the truth of this writing is the vividness with which things are seen. But the virtues of the book are of a piece—the modesty of the total intention seems inseparable from that directness of sight; if the tone rarely falters, if it is rare that shyness or embarrassment comes between the author and what she has to report, one feels that this is because of the balance in her mind between the kind of book she is capable of writing and the kind she wants to write.

The narrator of the book grows up in Russia between the revolution of 1905 and that of 1917. Russia we know here from what the narrator sees out of the window of her house, from what she meets on the roads on the way to school and what she overhears her parents talking about, through her relations with the girls, Gentile and Jewish, at the *Gymnasium* she attends, through the friendships and disagreements with the neighbors—one of whom, for example, shields the family during a pogrom, another of whom believes that the Jews are guilty of ritual murder. The family environment is of course even more closely observed, particularly the older generation—parents, grandparents, even uncles and aunts.

Not the least remarkable thing about the book is the fact that though the narrator is continuously engaged in recording the faith and the religious observances of her elders—and though we see the narrator steadily growing away from that faith—Mrs. Salaman nevertheless presents the way of life of the older generation without intruding upon it any of that weighted comment which we have almost come to expect in descriptions of this kind. Nowadays the danger of such an intrusion being ironic or sarcastic is less than it once was; the danger now—as any attentive reader of the Jewish periodicals can hardly fail to have noticed—is almost invariably that of excessive insistence by the author on the value of what is being presented, whether this insistence comes in the form of nostalgia, outright propaganda, or a wry I-know-it's-irrational-but-all-the-same kind of approach, which assures us simultaneously both of the author's sophistication and of his purity of heart.

In the present case, however, one feels with relief that the description of the preparations for Passover, of the women sitting on the floor bewailing the destruction of the Temple, of Zalmonka reciting the Book of Esther to the women while the men are at synagogue, even of the curses and benedictions which the narrator's mother uses so freely—these, simply, are what other Jewish writers are forever merely talking about. Mrs. Salaman is too busy showing it to us to talk about it; and she lets us draw our own conclusions about what she has shown. Not that she abdicates from her task of evaluating what she presents, but the evaluation is in the action itself, not outside it as covert or overt exhortation. We are shown a people whose day-to-day lives are inextricably and unquestioningly involved with religion, ritual, and seasonal observance; if the description of this life makes a demand upon us to reconsider our own dispersed and largely secular culture, it does so by its own virtue, and not because of any special inflections or asides or tones of voice on the part of the author.

THE life led by the family is far from idyllic; in Russia between 1905 and 1917 it could hardly be anything else. The outside world presses heavily on the family group—in hostility, in the threat of pogroms, in accusations of ritual murder, in children merely hissing "Judas" over the fence every other day. But to the narrator the outside world is attractive too. There is the reading group of Gentiles and Jews who gather to discuss the works of Tolstoy and Turgenev and Andreyev; there are the glimpses she has of the lives of her Gentile schoolfellows, which seem so much richer and freer than her own. (Her father rages because her brother, aged about twelve, secretly keeps a pair of doves. "Next thing," the father shouts in horror, "it will be billiards!") But what is less rich in some ways seems to her fuller in others; what is a source of insecurity in the outside world is within itself the source of security: the girl is tugged both ways. And even within the devoted family group itself there are strains and anxieties: the narrator's father is a victim of ulcers, alternately timid and choleric; the mother ir-

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ritates the narrator with her lack of education; the grandmother, the narrator learns, does not give her love equally to all the members of the family. A younger sister dies, the grandfather dies, toward the end—causing the most grief—the grandmother dies.

All this is given to us simply and unsentimentally, and so too is a sense of what it is like to grow up—to learn more, to see more, to experience the bewilderment at the responsibilities toward the self and others that growing up involves.

But *The Fertile Plain* is not by any means an unhappy book. The narrator is grateful for what life offered to her—she liked school, and loved some of her teachers; she liked listening to her grandmother's stories; she read; she enjoyed the decorum of the religious festivals, the friendships with girls at her school. These are all taken at their full value, without hindsights, comments of superiority from the present, or unchecked nostalgia, or regret, or anything else unnecessary to the re-creation of things as they were.

An impressive example of this scrupulousness is the last chapter, which tells what happened in 1917 when the news of the revolution came to the town. It is quite unlike anything one might expect. Crowds walked in the streets, bands played, processions marched aimlessly about, the clergy came out in their robes and blessed the crowds and the revolution, everyone was casually and absurdly happy. In a previous chapter we are told in relation to the later adventures of one character, "By then we were in the thick of a terrible civil war. Alexander's parents had been killed in a pogrom and only people like mother continued to say 'unheard of'. . . . Everything by then was unheard of." That is almost the only sentence in the book which tells us of what was to happen as a result of the revolution which was celebrated that afternoon; but neither that nor anything else is permitted to despoil the memory of the afternoon. Because the narrator is unashamed of the happiness she shared with everyone else, she can recall it in its fulness, and it is from this that the chapter derives its especial poignance.

Mrs. Salaman has approached the English language from the outside—in the short extracts given above the reader can possibly feel as un-English the rhythms of the language, the way the words are put together. They are not the less effective for being that. Again and again even the reader who knows the Russian masters only in translation cannot but be reminded that it must have been from Tolstoy and Turgenev and Chekhov that Mrs. Salaman learned how to write. It is the measure of *The Fertile Plain* that in its modest way it does succeed in putting itself into a literary relationship with these writers, and that from them it can claim to be decently, legitimately descended.

Slavery Reviewed

THE PECULIAR INSTITUTION: SLAVERY IN THE ANTE-BELLUM SOUTH. By KENNETH M. STAMPP. Knopf. 436 pp. $5.75.

Reviewed by DAVID DONALD

CURRENT American historiography is atavistic. Revisionists reject the findings of historians of their fathers' generation, only to assert truths that would have seemed commonplace to their grandparents. After angrily demolishing Charles A. Beard's economic interpretation of the Constitution, Robert E. Brown has left us with a surprisingly conventional view of the Critical Period;* an expert recently commented that George Bancroft's is still the best account of that era. Because they so emphatically reinforce 19th-century stereotypes about the Old Man Eloquent, Samuel Flagg Bemis's two lovingly written volumes on John Quincy Adams have seemed to some an exercise in ancestral piety. The moral issue as a cause of the Civil War, which last generation's revisionists decently buried, has been resurrected in a manner that would greatly have pleased H. E. Von Holst, and other writers are now finding that their grandparents were right in thinking highly of the Radical Republicans during Reconstruction.† The masters of American business are no longer considered robber barons but, just as in 1890, industrial statesmen, and one expects any day William McKinley to be defended as a major conservative statesman.

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*So christened by John Fiske in the *Critical Period of American History, 1783-1789*. For an appraisal of Brown, see Richard Hofstadter's "Reading the Constitution Anew" in COMMENTARY, September 1956.

†See T. Harry Williams's "Thaddeus Stevens: An American Radical" in COMMENTARY, June 1956.

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The latest example of this historiographical traditionalism is Kenneth M. Stampp's *The Peculiar Institution,* an elaborate and comprehensive history of Negro slavery in the antebellum South. Mr. Stampp, a young professor of history at the University of California, already well known for two previous excellent books on the Civil War generation, rejects completely the work which has, for a generation, been the standard study in this field. Ulrich B. Phillips's *American Negro Slavery,* first published in 1918, was written by a Southerner who had an abiding affection for his native region and who thought of Negroes amiably but condescendingly as an inferior race. Plantations seemed to Phillips "the best schools yet invented for the mass training of that sort of inert and backward people which the bulk of the American negroes represented." In his view slavery was only in part a labor system; it was a way of life and a pattern of race adjustment. Not economically advantageous to the South as a whole, or even to the owners of Negroes, slavery "kept money scarce, population sparse and land values . . . low. . . . But . . . it maintained order and a notable degree of harmony in a community where confusion worse confounded would not have been far to seek." Though it produced "injustice, oppression, brutality and heartburning," it also encouraged "gentleness, kind-hearted friendship and mutual loyalty" between the races. Phillips concluded that "it is impossible to agree that its basis and its operations were wholly evil, the law and the prophets to the contrary notwithstanding."

Mr. Stampp will have none of this magnolias-and-happy-pickaninnies approach. Slavery seems to him not a way of life but simply "a systematic method of controlling and exploiting labor." As a labor system, it was grim and unhappy, but profitable. Slaves worked hard; "the labor of the vast majority . . . ranged from what was normally expected of free labor in that period to levels that were clearly excessive." Far from being happy in chains, Negroes "longed for liberty and resisted bondage as much as any people could have done in their circumstances." To keep these reluctant laborers under control, the whites had to resort to "rigid discipline"; "without the power to punish, which the state conferred upon the master, bondage could not have existed." Though the "great majority" of slaveowners "preferred to use as little violence as possible," acts of cruelty were not exceptional and "a certain amount of savagery was inevitable." Many Southern planters made their profits from breeding slaves for the market, and the slave trade, though held in low repute by fastidious Southerners, was a necessary part of the whole system of Negro bondage. Slaves were poorly cared for; "most of them were limited to the bare necessities and lived at the subsistence level." Far from serving as a school in which Negroes were civilized, slavery "was in its essence a process of infantilization"; it "took away from the African his native culture and gave him, in exchange, little more than his vocational training." In fact, for the peculiar institution, which condemned the Southern blacks to bondage and made "the master class unfit to live easily in a society of free men," there was only one justification—that it paid. In 1860 the institution was "still functioning profitably." The "average slaveholder earned a reasonably satisfactory return upon his investment in slaves" and "the owner of a large slave gang earned a proportionately higher return on his investment than the owner of a small gang."

In short, Mr. Stampp has challenged every point of U. B. Phillips's argument in a book that is, in many ways, a highly commendable one. In the preparation of this study, Mr. Stampp carefully searched newspaper and manuscript collections in almost every Southern state, and he has also mastered the enormous secondary literature about Negro slavery. A model of accuracy and correctness, *The Peculiar Institution* is lucidly written, and its case is argued with great cogency. Perhaps the author is most to be praised because he has avoided pussyfooting. On a subject whose issues are so controversial and whose sources so complex, there are many temptations to equivocate, but Mr. Stampp has thoughtfully considered every important historical issue raised by Negro slavery, has thoroughly examined the sources on the subject, and has forcefully and succinctly taken a stand. *The Peculiar Institution,* then, is one of the most important and provocative works on Southern history to appear in our generation.

Yet, though fresh and new, *The Peculiar Institution* is not, in every way, an improvement upon Phillips's *American Negro Slavery.* The older work must still be consulted for the early history of American slavery, since Mr. Stampp brushes off the pre-1830 "setting" in

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a brief first chapter. Then, too, Phillips must be read for the changing pattern of American slavery in the pre-Civil War decades, for Mr. Stampp views the institution as "rigid and static" during these years, and examines it "institutionally with only slight regard for chronology."

Several years ago Mr. Stampp wrote an article attacking Phillips for "generalizing about the whole [slavery] regime from an unrepresentative sample," but it is clear that his sources have led him into much the same difficulty. Negro slaves wrote little during this period, and ordinary small white farmers, who formed the great bulk of the Southern population and owned about half of all the slaves, rarely kept elaborate diaries or records. The manuscript records extant have little to say about the thousands of hired slaves or about the 400,000 urban slaves in the South. Like his predecessor, Mr. Stampp has had to base his book chiefly upon records left by the large slaveholders, and, as a result, *The Peculiar Institution* is, like Phillips's earlier work, essentially a study of slavery on the big plantations—on which admittedly a minority both of slaves and of slaveholders resided.

Parts of Mr. Stampp's argument rest more upon inference and moral indignation than upon evidence. What the Negro slave himself thought, Mr. Stampp attempts to reconstruct from very sparse records, from the highly unrepresentative writings of escaped slaves like Frederick Douglass, and from "the logic of their situation." No evidence is given to support his contention that "young males . . . bearing the South's most distinguished names" more frequently practiced miscegenation than any other white group; Mr. Stampp has the grace to label this generalization as only "probable." His evidence that Southern masters bred slaves for the market is unconvincing, and his treatment of this sensitive point fails to take into consideration Avery Craven's sensible observation that, in those days before birth control was widely known, all Southern families, white and black, were equally large. Mr. Stampp's argument that slavery was, despite the repeated declarations of so many slaveholders, a profitable institution rests, not upon the careful profit-and-loss accounting which led Charles Sydnor and Allan Nevins to the exactly opposite conclusion, but upon inference. "As long as slavery showed no sign of decline or decay, it *must have been* [my italics] justifying itself economically. . . ."

On many major matters Mr. Stampp's evidence is indisputably correct, but his conclusions often seem to ignore the historical setting. Before judging whether it was inhumane to feed the average slave a "peck of corn meal and three or four pounds of salt pork" each week, one would have to know what free white workers in the South were receiving at the same time. Brutality and violence were often exercised against the slave, just as Mr. Stampp contends, but John Hope Franklin has recently reminded us, in *The Militant South*, that they were certainly not practiced against Negroes alone. The Southern slave codes were as brutal as Mr. Stampp alleges (though in practice they were seldom enforced in their full rigor), but, as Richard B. Morris has demonstrated, free labor in the South operated under laws concerning indentureship, apprenticeship, and vagabondage nearly as harsh.

THERE is in Mr. Stampp's thinking a certain a-historical turn, so often characteristic of deeply committed liberals. Like every intelligent modern American, he knows that psychological and anthropological studies demonstrate that "Negroes and whites have approximately the same intellectual potentialities." From this premise he concludes "that innately Negroes *are*, after all, only white men with black skins, nothing more, nothing less." For him, then, there cannot be any genuine problem of race adjustment in the South; slavery was merely a monstrous evil. Such an argument, however logical, ignores the old but still valid injunction of W. A. Dunning that "influence on the sequence of human affairs has been exercised, not by what really happened, but by what men erroneously believed to have happened," since men act upon "the error that passes as history at the time, not from the truth that becomes known long after." Negro slaves may, as Mr. Stampp thinks, have been ready for complete assimilation into a free American society when only one generation out of Africa—but their masters certainly did not think so. Southern slave codes, Southern violence, then Southern insistence upon separation of the races were evidence of a very real fear, not of some avaricious desire to keep a docile labor force in subjection.

Mr. Stampp's book, so admirable in many ways, is long on morality, short on historical understanding. It repudiates Phillips, but it contains nothing that would offend an aboli-

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tionist of a hundred years ago. Perhaps the weaknesses of this important and provocative book should serve as a warning to the new American traditionalists that ancestral piety in historical writing has its limitations.

An American Writer

THE LETTERS OF THOMAS WOLFE. Edited by ELIZABETH NOWELL. Scribner's. 797 pp. $10.00.

Reviewed by MILTON HINDUS

CHARACTERISTICALLY, this book of Wolfe's letters is a behemoth. Wolfe was one of those writers—and there were better ones than he who did the same thing (e.g. Rabelais and Whitman)—who never used one word where three might serve just as well. He emphatically did not believe in the virtue of concentration and vigorously defended his own position against Scott Fitzgerald's friendly recommendation to him of the attractions of "the novel of selected incidents." Wolfe replied to Fitzgerald (in a letter printed here but already available to us in *The Crack-Up*): "You say that the great writer like Flaubert has consciously left out the stuff that Bill or Joe will come along presently and put in. Well, don't forget, Scott, that a great writer is not only a leaver-outer but also a putter-inner, and that Shakespeare and Cervantes and Dostoievsky were great putter-inners—greater putter-inners in fact, than taker-outers—and they will be remembered for what they put in—remembered, I venture to say, as long as Monsieur Flaubert will be remembered for what he left out."

Wolfe was perfectly right, though not perhaps as regards his own work—which was what Fitzgerald was talking about. The final result alone counts. We may become impatient with a wordy writer, but if he manages to transmute quantity into power, we are not going to complain. With Wolfe, unfortunately, it wasn't always so. He gives the impression sometimes of a man being buffeted by a high wind and unable to distinguish the wind from inspiration. That is not, I confess, how he appeared to me when I was an undergraduate and he was, together with Romain Rolland, one of my favorite writers. But the years have not been kind to either Wolfe or Rolland. There are certain books which go to pieces for us without our ever rereading them. Our ex-

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periences and reflections confirm the insights of certain artists, so that they gain with the passing of time, while ruthlessly breaking down others which once appeared valid.

WOLFE was born in 1900 and died about two months short of his thirty-eighth birthday. For a writer who was so prolific and so much in the public eye, he made curiously little money. In a letter to Charles Scribner III, written not long before his death, he says that the $3,000 that he had to spend in settling a libel suit represented 10 per cent of the earnings of his whole literary career. Since Wolfe had begun to earn money in 1929 with *Look Homeward, Angel,* that would work out to something between $3,000 and $4,000 a year, which, even considering that these were depression years, is pathetically little. Wolfe never worked for Hollywood, though tempted, and when his novel *Of Time and the River* became a success in 1935 he began worrying and wrote his editor: "How unreasonable and contradictory our natures are! It would be fantastic and comical to know that I had written a 'best seller,' it would be wonderful to get the money that would come from it, and yet I would be troubled by it too—to know I had written a best-seller, was a best-seller kind of writer: I would worry then to know what was wrong with my book, whether you and I had done something to cheapen it and make it popular." He needn't have worried on this score, because he could not help being himself at all times. One of his early critics perceived "a dangerous facility" in Wolfe's work, and we know what he meant by this: that Wolfe could turn it on or off like a tap of water. But this facility never became the kind of adroitness which could serve purposes alien to his own feelings. Except on one or two occasions, he never broke into the big-circulation magazines. Had he gone to Hollywood he would have done even worse than Fitzgerald did there, for Fitzgerald (to his ultimate loss) was gifted with a cleverness and detachment that Wolfe never had.

ELIZABETH NOWELL, who introduces this correspondence, succeeds in outlining the shape of Wolfe's abortive career as a man of letters very distinctly. The three most important relationships of Wolfe's adult life were with George Pierce Baker, the director of Harvard's famous 47 Dramatic Workshop, with Maxwell Perkins, his editor at Scribner's, and with Aline Bernstein. Through Baker he tried to become a playwright but failed to secure production by any but small amateur groups. Under Perkins's intelligent and sensitive handling, the importance of which he himself acknowledged in the dedication of his second book, Wolfe very nearly became a popular novelist. But he eventually broke with Baker and even with Perkins, who had become a kind of father-surrogate to him, not so much because he found fault with them, but—as he himself recognized—because of his strong drive toward a condition of loneliness. This, indeed, is the central theme of his work: the book that became his first novel was originally supposed to be called "Alone, Alone" and the epigraph was to be the well-known stanza from Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* that begins with those words.

With Aline Bernstein, who has long been known to have played a very important role in Wolfe's life (and with whom, incidentally, only a fraction of the correspondence that exists has been published in this book), he broke too; in his disillusioned view of her, she was simply "a middle-aged Jewish woman old enough to be my mother." This, in context, is meant to be more descriptive than malicious. But Wolfe never lost sight of her Jewishness. After their break, when she published a book of stories in which he was portrayed, he wrote her: "In all your stories you show the remarkably sharp, accurate and cynical observation of your race." This, too, in context, is not an entirely hostile observation. Wolfe's treatment of Jewish characters in his novels brought an accusation of anti-Semitism upon him. But in his letters he defends himself several times against this imputation. To one correspondent he insists that he has been misunderstood and that he regards anti-Semitism as a "hostile and ugly feeling which, I am sure, we both abhor." To another correspondent, who had been a student of his at New York University, he writes that the charge of anti-Semitism is "absolutely groundless." These protestations ring true, though his own emotions on this point, as on so many others in his life, were probably not entirely clear to him. At one time in the 30's, there was a rumor (without any clear basis in fact) that Wolfe himself was partly Jewish, and this disturbed him very much. It should perhaps be added, to round out the record, that he took an unequivocal stand against the Nazis (after being wined and flattered by them during a

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visit to Germany) in a piece which appeared in the *New Republic*. It was proposed to translate this into Yiddish, but Wolfe hesitated to grant permission since, he said, he had not intended to make propaganda.

WOLFE'S letters confirm certain notions one has always had concerning his literary affinities and origins. He is probably the most distinguished descendant in the line of Whitman—more distinguished than Sandburg, who is a literal-minded imitator of the master's manner, or even than Hart Crane. And it is understandable, too, that his admiration of the Bible should be expressed even more ecstatically than Whitman's. In 1930 he writes Perkins: "I am all alone and sometimes I doubt: do you think I'll ever amount to anything? I read Shakespeare, Racine, the English Poets, and the Bible. I have not read the Bible since I was a child—it is the most magnificent book that was ever written: when Walter Scott was dying, he called for 'The Book' and they asked him 'What book?' and he said 'There is only one'—and it is true. It is richer and grander than Shakespeare even, and everything looks sick beside it. . . ."

Wolfe's work (and these letters) betray a more immediate parentage in Joyce and Proust. What might have been guessed from his *Story of a Novel* can be pinned down decisively here. It is from Proust that he took his emphasis on sensory impressions as a way of resurrecting the dead past; from Joyce came some of the verbalism (without the control) as well as the idea that every man was on a journey in search of a lost father.

The "insatiable bookishness" that Wolfe speaks of in one of his early letters is a source of both strength and weakness. He read, he admits in another of his letters, "not analytically but voraciously," and compares his habits in this respect to those of Coleridge. His Gargantuan appetite found no better food than print. He was born to devour libraries in the manner of Johnson or Gibbon, though odd little mistakes in the references to books seem to show that he could not always keep from being swamped by what he read. That he was not sufficiently critical he admitted, but even this admission does not prepare us for his coupling of the names of Wassermann and Mann—some sort of pun there perhaps!

I must say that these letters have changed

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my opinion of Wolfe somewhat; he now appears to me as something better than an epigone of Whitman. I am not sure if in the canon of his own work this may not prove to be his strongest and most sympathetic volume. Certainly, I was moved by his character as it comes through here. He was a very hard worker, and scrupulous in his effort to give back to the world more than he took from it. I kept thinking afterward of Keats's friend, the painter Benjamin Robert Haydon, who relied for his lasting fame on vast historical canvases which are mostly forgotten but who lives on in the autobiography which was a mere by-product, a shaving of his major effort. Wolfe did not intend these letters as an apologia, and yet they serve to justify his life.

Like three of the great English Romantics of the early 19th century—Keats, Shelley, Byron—and like two other Romantics of our own time—Hart Crane and Dylan Thomas—Wolfe died before his fortieth year. What he might have become had he lived longer we can never know, but what he was, now that the ballyhoo has died down a little, becomes increasingly plain. Keats, shortly before his death, asserted that it was his destiny to be "among the English poets." A generation later, he was elevated by Matthew Arnold not only "among the English poets" but to a position "with Shakespeare." Wolfe will never achieve such glory, but it is safe to say, fifty-six years after his birth, that he will be remembered among the American writers of our time.

The Social Buber

MARTIN BUBER, THE LIFE OF DIALOGUE. By MAURICE S. FRIEDMAN. University of Chicago Press. 310 pp. $6.00.

THE WRITINGS OF MARTIN BUBER. Selected, Edited, and Introduced by WILL HERBERG. Meridian. 351 pp. $1.35.

Reviewed by HEINZ POLITZER

IT IS Professor Friedman's great merit to have shown the gradual growth of Buber's thought from "an early period of mysticism through a middle period of existentialism to a final period of developing dialogical philosophy." That this growth was an altogether organic one is affirmed by Will Herberg in his preface to the Meridian volume: "Each of the stages is transcended and subsumed in its successors: one aspect of the mystical reappears in the existential, and the existential is fulfilled and deepened in the dialogical." Professor Friedman also succeeds admirably in showing the transformation of Buber from a somewhat uneasy mystic isolated with his private meditations into what Paul E. Pfuetze has called a "Social Self" ready and eager to communicate with the *Thou* of any person or group who might want to lay claim on him. Finally, by focusing his study on Buber's concept of the dialogue between *I* and *Thou,* Professor Friedman is able to see the unity of Buber's contributions to fields as disparate as epistemology, pedagogy, psychology, ethics, social philosophy, and theology.

Buber wrote *I and Thou* when he was fighting to free himself from the mysticism of his earlier period. The book is written in an exhortatory, rhythmic style which owes much to Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra.* But the resemblance to Nietzsche does not extend to substance. For whereas the Nietzschean superman can establish his identity only in absolute freedom, cut off from all human ties, Buber's conception of the genuine person acting in supreme freedom is inextricably involved with the idea of a relationship (*Bindung*) with a fellow man or fellow being, a *Thou.* "Only he who knows relation and knows about the presence of the *Thou* is capable of decision. He who decides is free," says Buber in *I and Thou.* But the *Thou,* in Buber's view, need not be a human being or group of beings; it can be a tree (here speaks Buber the mystic, the disciple of Jakob Böhme and especially Meister Eckhart); and it can be God, the *Eternal Thou.*

Buber also takes pains to distinguish the *I-Thou* from the *I-It* relationship. "The primary word *I-Thou* can only be spoken with the whole being. The primary word *I-It* can never be spoken with the whole being." As long as man merely makes use of a thing—or, for that matter, another human being—as long as he approaches it without opening himself up to it, so long will the relationship remain one between an *I* and an *It,* with the *I* left unfulfilled, unfathomed, inauthentic. And this is the great danger in a world of technology, a world in which man is conditioned to regard the realities around him as so many *It's* to be used and manipulated. "Real existence," says Buber, "that is, real man in his relation to his being

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is comprehensible only in connection with the nature of the being to which he stands in relation."

But despite the virtues of Professor Friedman's analysis, few who have been fortunate enough to come under the spell of a dialogue with Buber himself will close this book completely satisfied. The polymath Buber is there all right; so is the Utopian socialist, the professor, and even the novelist, editor, and translator Buber. What is missing is precisely what Professor Friedman alludes to in his subtitle: the *life* of the dialogue.

FROM the time when the Germans marched against El Alamein and threatened the Jewish community in Palestine with destruction, until the time when the British prepared to leave Palestine in a state of utter confusion, I was Buber's neighbor in Deir-Abou-Tor. This hill, which overlooks the stone walls of the Old City of Jerusalem, is said to be the place where the house of the High Priest Caiaphas stood. For more than four years I had an opportunity of seeing Buber in conversation with the members of his family, his servant Jalil, Jewish students and Arab neighbors, notables, scholars, and clergymen from many countries and of many creeds, and even—or rather especially—with children. I observed his phenomenal gift for communicating, for "embracing" the "otherness" of the many *Thou*'s who addressed themselves to him, and for taking into account in his answer even the silence behind the other's word. And it was out of this firsthand experience that I came to understand Buber's theory of the dialogue.

Jew and Gentile alike have testified to the charismatic character of Buber's speech. It is not the dialogue itself which Paul Tillich recalls from one of his conversations with Buber, "but the radiation of a mind 'full of God'. . . . It was a condensed, almost substantial presence of the divine, as I have seldom experienced it—at least to such a degree—among Christians" (COMMENTARY, June 1948). And although, unlike Professor Tillich, I have never been able to feel the presence of the divine in Buber's conversations with me, I knew that in talking to him I was engaged in a genuine dialogue, a living exchange between personalities. Today I realize that I was the one whose mind was absent whenever a truly dialogical situation failed to develop between us. For Buber never withheld himself, and he was most present, most "spiritualized," when he discussed the most commonplace subjects. Franz Rosenzweig is said to have remarked once that Buber's real stature became evident only to those who had seen him in his dressing gown. And indeed, there is in Buber an immediacy, an interest in the Here and Now of his conversant, and a humor, which defy any attempts at translation into a scholar's sober prose or organization into a staid academic treatise.

Nor do Buber's supra-rational insights translate easily into the language of positivists and logicians, which is one reason why—as Friedman points out—disturbing traces of his earlier "mystical" style have been carried over into the existential and dialogical stages of his philosophy; even so devoted an interpreter as Will Herberg feels compelled to remark that Buber's concept of the *Thou* has brought upon him "the not altogether unmerited charge of mysticizing."

But the mixture of styles in Buber is only a reflection of the complexity of his thought. For without denying the authority of analytical thinking in those provinces of human existence which are, so to speak, under its jurisdiction,

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he has opposed the claim of this latter-day enlightenment to rule not as an enlightened but an absolute despot. He has stressed the necessity of complementing the regimen of logic by a true regard for "depth," the region that lies beyond the causal laws which govern our thinking. Thus, and only thus, can the totality of human existence be grasped; thus, and only thus, consciously *and* unconsciously, by word *and* silence, analysis *and* synthesis, can man achieve the wholeness of being which enables him to enter fully into the social communion of the dialogue.

Is it therefore too much to say that the essence of Buber's work and personality would best be captured in an anthology of some of his written and spoken words, supplemented perhaps by testimonies of the many people whose lives have been changed through the experience of a dialogue with him; a book very similar to the one in which he himself once gathered the *Tales of the Hasidim.* Will Herberg's informative selection in the Meridian series seems to point in this direction. (A similar anthology of shorter and more varied pieces was issued in 1953 under the title *Einsichten* by the German publishing house Insel Verlag.)

Selection, Herberg says, "is no mechanical operation, and the selection I have made more or less obviously reflects my convictions as to what aspects of Buber's thinking are of particular significance amidst the problems and perplexities of our time." Mr. Herberg, of course, is primarily concerned with social thought and its roots in Biblical faith. Yet no selection of Buber's writings which claims to be representative and more than merely personal can neglect Buber's work on Hasidism. And a chapter from his too little known novel, *For the Sake of Heaven,* would have improved the collection, too.

Although Mr. Herberg's volume contains Buber's letter to Gandhi on the applicability of *satyagraha* (non-violence) to conditions in Palestine under the British Mandate and to European Jewry under Hitler, as well as his answer to the "silent questions" raised by Henri Bergson and Simone Weil, one would have liked to see a few more of Buber's essays addressed to other nations and other creeds. For he is far more than an internal Jewish phenomenon. Martin Buber's supreme contribution lies in the fullness with which he confronts *all* peoples and *all* creeds.

Early Jewish Traveler

THREE YEARS IN AMERICA, 1859-1862. By I. J. BENJAMIN. Translated from the German by Charles Reznikoff. The Jewish Publication Society of America. Vol. I, 335 pp. Vol. II, 290 pp. Set, $7.50.

Reviewed by JOHN HIGHAM

A CENTURY ago, when the foreign correspondent was almost unheard of and the social scientist was an armchair philosopher, America swarmed with scribbling travelers. Above all, they were curious about the kind of society that was developing in the New World. Their observations formed part of that second discovery of America which was one of the important concerns of 19th-century Europe; for the American social order seemed as portentous to 18th- and 19th-century Europeans as the untapped resources of the continent had been to the first age of discovery. The best of these amateur sociologists appraised American life with a verve and penetration that their professional successors often lacked; and their books retain an informal freshness that earnest scholarship may well envy.

Democracy in America, de Tocqueville's great classic, has, of course, always been popular, and some of the early European commentaries on America have received a deservedly wide audience in recent years through anthologies and new editions. Many more, however, have never reached an American public and have rarely been consulted even by scholars. The present book, published originally in Germany in 1862, was very little known until Oscar Handlin seven years ago included a selection from it in an excellent anthology, *This Was America.* Now the whole work appears in English for the first time. Although much inferior to the more celebrated travel narratives of the period, it has a certain interest as the earliest such book by a Jew.

The author was a solemn, self-important man from Moldavia engaged in a grandiose venture of a specifically Jewish character. He called himself Benjamin II, for he had undertaken to duplicate the feats of the great medieval traveler, Benjamin of Tudela, in scouring the earth to locate and describe the scattered tribes of Israel. He had already gone

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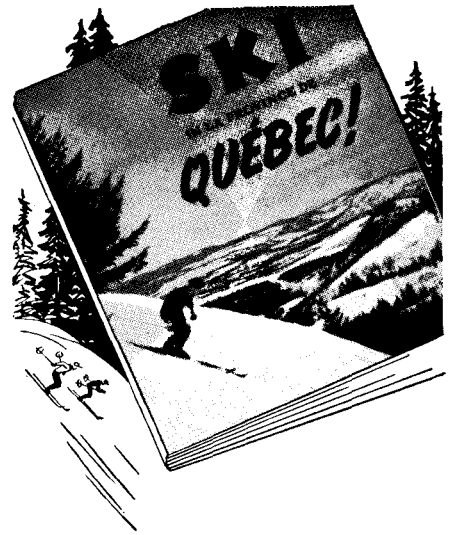
far into Asia and had published a book on that stage of his journeys a few years before. His arrival in New York in 1859 marked a new phase of this worldwide quest. Wherever he went in America, Benjamin first sought out the local Jewish leaders, took note of their congregations and organized activities, and applied for the means of continuing his tour. Although his rather casually collected data are not always reliable, scholars will be glad to have easy access to the miscellaneous information Benjamin provides on Jewish communities scattered throughout the land.

Benjamin rejoiced to see the abounding prosperity of American Jewry and its freedom from oppression, and what especially struck him was the vigorous upbuilding of communal institutions. But all was not well. Congregations were riven by national divisions and by a general conflict between Orthodoxy and Reform. Many rabbis and teachers, to say nothing of the laity, knew shockingly little of either the Talmud or Jewish literature. ("It happens, not infrequently, that he, who at home enjoyed not even the benefits of a superficial education, in this country holds his head high and proud and makes a lot of noise, like an empty ear of grain.") And, in general, a spirit of materialism had a stifling effect on spiritual values. There was a measure of truth in these strictures. They remind us that the main achievements of American Jewry a century ago were largely material and not at all intellectual or artistic.

The same charges of materialism and cultural immaturity could be made, with qualifications, against the rest of America, and Benjamin emphatically made them. Here he echoed, in fact, the main complaints that European travelers have directed at America from the beginning of the 19th century to the present. Yet apart from telling us that American women spend their time eating candy and repairing its ravages at their dentists' offices, Benjamin hardly bothered to draw up a bill of particulars. The truth was that, disapprove though he might of the tenor of American life, its sheer vitality fascinated him. The deeper he got into America, the less attention he paid to the Jews, the less he tried to generalize his experience, and the more he yielded to a simple description of the scene before him. By far the largest part of the book deals with California, Oregon, and Utah. In spite of Benjamin's pretentious belief that he was serving the science of geography by touring the Far



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West, one suspects that the earnest world missionary ended simply by having a good American time.

For the reader, however, the trip becomes more and more of a bore. If Benjamin had stuck to his original purpose, he might have done greater justice to a formative period in American Jewish life. But the wider he ranged from the things he knew something about, the more glaringly his defects as a writer and social critic stand out. Insensitive to individual character or personality, uninterested in politics, and uncurious about most social relationships, he compiled a flavorless hotchpotch. Uncritically, he set down his own random impressions, stories that others told him, and such facts as he found in local histories, almanacs, and newspapers. Since much of the book, including a long chronicle of San Francisco, is copied from the latter sources, it smells of the lamp and the library. Side by side, one finds the measurements of a giant mushroom on display in a Montgomery Street restaurant, figures on the export of wheat, the names of all the members of the Eureka Benevolent Society, and the complete proceedings of a Fourth of July celebration in Sacramento. That so prosy and shapeless a book should have been published in the first place demonstrates how avidly 19th-century Europe consumed first-hand reports about America.

There are, of course, vivid details along with the pedantic ones. Benjamin's contempt for the Chinese on the West Coast gives a pungency to his account of their pageants and customs. His sketch of the sober respectability that had already tamed San Francisco's night life indicates how fleeting the frontier era was. And his efforts to steal a skull from an Indian burial ground where the worms had not completed their work enlivens the return trip across the Plains. But to quarry what is usable and interesting for Western social history from these garrulous pages is a research task, and researchers will curse the editor for not helping them with an index.

An introduction by Oscar Handlin contains a brief revealing glimpse of the background from which Benjamin derived and a long, somewhat tendentious review of the forces that led to the American Civil War. But to Benjamin, the Civil War was a largely incomprehensible matter which he mentions very little.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

IRVING KRISTOL is co-editor of *Encounter* in London.

DAN JACOBSON'S most recent novel, *A Dance in the Sun*, was reviewed in our issue of last August.

DAVID DONALD, associate professor of history at Columbia, is the author of *Lincoln Reconsidered*, among other works on the Civil War period.

MILTON HINDUS is associate professor of English at Brandeis and the author of books on Proust and Céline, as well as the editor of a volume on Whitman.

HEINZ POLITZER, a frequent contributor, teaches in the German department at Oberlin College.

JOHN HIGHAM, associate professor of history at Rutgers, is the author of *Strangers in the Land*, a study of American nativism.

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This *I Believe*

"Generations of people have been brought up by not sparing the rod or the lash of the tongue without decreasing by one whit the sum total of hostility, intolerance, and deep anxiety that disturbs personal relations today, makes for mental and physical disease, and breaks out every so often in world-wide armed conflict. Can we afford not to try the other way of love, appreciation, and a permissive, friendly attitude toward our children? It may take a little extra effort on the part of those of us who have been hurt ourselves by parents who were determined to hold the whip hand and exert pressure on us to conform. But by making that effort we can stop perpetuating the old destructive pattern that has long been so costly in terms of human unhappiness and lack of social progress.

"Actually the things that a baby needs most cost little in terms of dollars and cents. He has never heard of the Joneses. He is unconcerned about whether you have a million dollars or just enough to pay for his arrival. He does not care whether you have a new car or none at all. He can be as happy in a one-room apartment as in a ten-room house surrounded with landscape gardening.

"What he wants is love, warmth, and acceptance for himself alone, a breast to snuggle, strong arms to hold him and make him feel safe, smiles and cheerfulness, serenity and a sense of order, someone to come to him quickly when he cries out of his sense of newness and strangeness. He wants you not to be too busy to play with him or too serious to enjoy him. He wants you to stir his awakening mind to a joy and interest in the world around him. He wants the feelings in his small body to be pleasant ones that satisfy his instinctual needs. He wants two parents who love each other so generously that there is plenty of love left to flow over for him. He wants and needs emotional security."

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